JULIUS EVOLA

NOTES ON THE THIRD REICH

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Original: *Il fascismo visto dalla destra; Note sul terzo Reich*, Rome: G. Volpe, 1974.
First English edition published in 2013 by Arktos Media Ltd.
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Translation: E. Christian Kopff
Editor: John B. Morgan
Cover Design: Andreas Nilsson
Layout: Daniel Friberg

ARKTOS MEDIA LTD
www.arktos.com

NOTES ON THE THIRD REICH

By Julius Evola

Translated with a Foreword by E. Christian Kopff

ARKTOS
LONDON 2013

A Note from the Editor

The footnotes to the Introduction were added by E. Christian Kopff. The footnotes to the text itself were added by me. The original Italian edition of this work contained a number of footnotes added by Evola himself. To avoid confusion, these have been included as part of the main body of the text, but are bracketed and indicated to make it clear that they are notes.

Where sources in other languages have been cited, I have attempted to replace them with existing English-language editions. Citations to works for which I could locate no translation are retained in their original language. Web site addresses for on-line sources were verified as accurate and available during March 2013.

Once again, I would like to thank Professor E. Christian Kopff for his outstanding and generous work on this volume, as with its companion, *Fascism Viewed from the Right*.

JOHN B. MORGAN IV
Panaji, Goa, India,
12 April 2013

Foreword

by E. Christian Kopff

In 1964, Julius Evola published *Fascism: Essay of a Critical Analysis from the Point of View of the Right*,[1] a critical discussion of the *Ventennio*, the 'Twenty Years' of Fascist rule in Italy (28 October 1922-25 July 1943) from the perspective of the Integral Traditionalism of which he was one of the main exponents. For the second edition of 1970, which appeared under the shorter and wittier title, *Fascism Viewed from the Right*, [2] he composed a parallel analysis of the German Third Reich. The present book was prepared as an appendix consisting of a parallel analysis of the German Third Reich. Evola had always maintained a principled distance from official Fascism, an attitude that was reciprocated by most mainstream Fascist leaders. (The exceptions were significant, however: Roberto Farinacci, Fascist boss (*ras*) of Cremona, and Benito Mussolini himself.) In *Fascism Viewed from the Right* Evola argued that some of the key tenets of Fascism were good and consistent with the traditional principles of the True Right. Among these principles is a conception of the state, which places it over the people and the nation, which are created by the state. This view of the state is consistent not only with hierarchy, but also with a subsidiary or federalist philosophy. An authoritative state is strong enough to encourage decisions to be made at the lowest appropriate level. In this view, politics are superior to economics, which is a tool the state uses for the good of the nation it has created and is shaping. For Evola, the failure of Fascism was not due to the loss of the Second World War, which was the result only of the contingencies of its historical circumstances, and certainly not to its principles, but to the weaknesses of the Italian people, who had been demoralised by generations of living under a regime founded on the radical principles of the French Revolution and nineteenth century liberalism and radicalism, the 'Immortal Principles' of 1789 and 1848.

Evola's view of National Socialism and the Third Reich was virtually the reverse. He detested the principles of Hitler's regime, especially its

emphasis on one leader and its centralising policies that undermined and subverted Germany's long traditions of federalism. Evola also objected to the idea that race was the foundation of the nation and the people the basis of the state. Evola's objections to National Socialist views of race were based on a principled objection to biological reductionism, which he argued was a materialist vision that ignored the reality that, unlike thoroughbred horses or dogs of different breeds, humans are soul and spirit (or character and openness to the transcendent) as well as, actually much more than, body, flesh and bones. After the Second World War, Evola denounced in the strongest terms the practical results of Nazi racism, not only for the terrible loss of life involved but also for its subversion of the rule of law on the basis of a misuse of modern science, which Evola distrusted on principle.

On the other hand, Evola admired Germany and German culture and felt that the traditions of hierarchy, federalism and a state based on traditional orders, traditions found throughout central Europe and especially in Prussia, still existed in the period between the two World Wars and could have survived Nazism and provided the basis for the restoration of what was traditional and vital in Europe. Evola discusses the reasons for his beliefs in *Notes on the Third Reich*, but he also had other reasons to admire the Germans and the German culture that influenced him, although he does not discuss them in this work.

German aristocrats and intellectuals in the 1930s welcomed and celebrated Evola's views and works much more enthusiastically than he ever experienced in Italy at any stage of his life. In the 1920s Evola had moved from flirting with Dadaism to developing a worldview on the basis of Indian, Far Eastern and ancient Mediterranean traditions under the influence of René Guénon and Arturo Reghini. He tried out his ideas in *Critica Fascista*, a journal edited by the Fascist intellectual, Giuseppe Bottai, who had served in the army with Evola in the First World War. Evola then published them as a book in 1928, *Imperialismo Pagano* (Pagan Imperialism).[3] Evola argued that Fascism was consistent with the great Roman traditions, but not with Christianity and especially the contemporary Catholic Church, whose commitment to universalism was fundamentally inconsistent with Fascist goals. The book caused a lively debate that included Fascists and Catholics. With the Concordat of 1929, by which the Vatican recognised the legitimacy of the Italian state for the first time since

1870 and Catholicism was publically recognised as the official religion of Italy, the debate ended and Bottai cut his ties with Evola.

The situation was quite different in Germany. In 1933 Evola published a significantly expanded German translation, *Heidnischer Imperialismus* (Heathen Imperialism),[4] was greeted with enthusiastic interest in Germany. Evola was invited to speak there and addressed important conservative groups, such as the Berlin Herrenklub. The German translation of his most important work, *Revolt against the Modern World*,[5] in 1935 was received even more enthusiastically with many positive reviews, including one by the German poet, Gottfried Benn.[6] Evola's travels and talks in Germany eventually attracted the attention of the SS. Their report reveals what the German government could make of Evola. After noting that Evola was 'only tolerated by official Fascism,' the report summarised three of his lectures, and concluded, 'The ultimate and secret motivation for Evola's theories and plans must be sought in a revolt of the old aristocracy against today's world, which is totally alienated from the upper class. This confirms the initial German impression: that we are dealing with a "reactionary Roman." … His political plans for a Roman-Germanic Imperium are of a utopian character, and moreover very apt to cause ideological confusions. Since Evola is also only tolerated and barely supported by Fascism, it is tactically not necessary to accommodate his tendencies from our side.' A memo dated 8 August 1938 reports that Himmler himself 'has acknowledged the report regarding the lectures of Baron Evola and is in full agreement with the thoughts and recommendations stated in the last paragraph thereof,' which recommend ignoring Evola and discouraging his influence in Germany.[7]

Official Nazism had as little use for Evola as he had for it. Yet Evola admired German culture and was admired by cultured Germans. The intellectual circles that he moved in are commonly known as the Conservative Revolution, the short-hand term for different groups of radical traditionalists and opponents of liberalism and radicalism whose views and attitudes were, however, quite different from those of the most significant figures and initiatives of Nazi Germany and were consistently marginalized or ignored by the Nazis after they achieved power. The earliest and best academic discussion of this movement and its distinctive characteristics remains Armin Mohler's *The Conservative Revolution in Germany 1918-*

1933.[8] Although no major figure in this movement shared Evola's commitment to Integral Traditionalism, its leading figures were opposed to liberalism and were equally disenchanted by the Nazi regime and (with a few exceptions) played little or no part in official Nazi activities. A brief discussion of this movement, based mainly on Mohler's book, will indicate why Evola's books and lectures were so much more successful in Germany than in Italy.

Mohler argued that the Conservative Revolution and National Socialism were very different. While individual exponents of the Conservative Revolution were active in the Third Reich, they played the parts of 'Trotskyites' and heretics. To the extent that the regime used their ideas after 1933, it converted them into political slogans and stripped them of their original depth and meaning. In fact, the most brilliant writers of the Conservative Revolution were silenced or marginalized during the National Socialist period, such as Oswald Spengler, Ernst Jünger and Gottfried Benn. The regime trusted them as little as it did Evola.

Evola shared the contempt for the bourgeois ethos felt by many of the leaders of the Conservative Revolution. The intellectuals of that movement remembered life under Kaiser Wilhelm II, much as English modernists remembered the Victorian era, as bourgeois and smug. The War changed everything. 'The War is our father,' wrote Ernst Jünger. 'He begat us in the burning embrace of the battlefield trenches as a new race.'[9] After the war the Weimar Republic represented for the Conservative Revolution the last, tired gasp of *Wilhelminismus*, bourgeois and boring. Soldiers returned from the war alienated from old ideas and attitudes. Spiritually, they 'had to seek shelter in houses that their parents had built before the war,' in Jünger's words.[10] In both *Fascism Viewed from the Right* and *Notes on the Third Reich* Evola commented on the important role of veterans in anti-liberal movements in Italy and Germany.

To illustrate the worldview of the Conservative Revolution, Mohler discusses the opposition of the circle and the line. The modern world tends to see historical and personal development as a line. Conservative Revolutionaries reassumed the older idea of the circle. The centrality of this opposition is found in an important influence on both the Conservative Revolution and Evola, like Otto Weininger. The key figure, however, is Friedrich Nietzsche. Mohler's pages on Nietzsche were the first scholarly

attempt to rescue Nietzsche from his reputation as a proto-Nazi and re-establish him as the key figure in moving beyond the world of the Enlightenment, liberalism and socialism. (At the same time, Walter Kaufmann was rescuing Nietzsche in the English-speaking world.)[11]

'Ich bin kein Mensch, ich bin Dynamit,' Nietzsche wrote in *Ecce Homo*.[12] His insight that God is dead for modern man led to his vision of nihilism, which is overcome by the Eternal Return and the positive revaluing of all values as humans move on to the next stage of human development. Amid the wreckage left by the World War, proponents of the Conservative Revolution consistently predicted the beginning of a new age, which would replace bourgeois liberalism and proletarian Communism. 'We are standing at a turning point in history as significant as the change from the Stone Age to the age of metals,' Ernst Jünger wrote.[13] This new age would be a true Renaissance, a re-birth of national origins. The writers of the Conservative Revolution saw this happening in Italy and hoped it would happen in Germany as well.[14] For Gottfried Benn, the new Renaissance, like the Italian one, would be a rebirth of Classical Antiquity, with a greater emphasis on the Greeks than on the Romans, who inspired the older Renaissance. Benn used the entire ancient world, Greek and Roman, pagan and Christian, to express his feeling of standing at a turning point, where the past seems dead and the future is unclear, like T. S. Eliot in 'The Wasteland.' When Evola described the modern world as the Hindu *kali-yuga* or Dark Age, his language implied that this Dark Age will be followed by a new Golden Age, a view consistent with Jünger's expectation of a new epoch.

Conservative Revolutionaries faced the challenge of determining what to conserve. Moeller van den Bruck wrote in *Das Dritte Reich* (The Third Reich, a book that gave a slogan to the Nazi regime, which otherwise ignored him), 'As for what is going to change in a people's history, let it change. The unchangeable, what remains, is more powerful and more important than the changeable, which consists of the addition or subtraction of secondary elements.'[15] Albrecht Erich Günther wrote to Mohler in *Der Ring* (1931), a magazine of the Conservative Revolution, that, like Moeller van den Bruck, 'We understand conservative to mean not hanging onto what existed yesterday, but a life based on what is always true and valid.' Mohler explains, 'This means that the conservative does not live only in the

future like the true believer in progress, nor only in the past, like the reactionary, but in a consummated present, where past and future are united. We hear Nietzsche's "Great Noon."'[16] An editorial proclaimed 'Revolution means re-volution, turning back, the coming again of an earlier and better condition.'[17]

The writers of the Conservative Revolution shared with Evola a critical distance from Christianity. Mohler argues that Nietzsche and the Conservative Revolutionary writers he influenced saw Christianity as fundamentally 'progressive.' That Christianity by its history and nature has a linear view of time and history was argued in Oscar Cullmann's *Christ and Time*.[18] Mohler quotes similar ideas from the Catholic thinker Romano Guardini. Historically, there were Christians among the writers of the Conservative Revolution in the '20s and '30s, and later Christian writers shared its insights. Since, however, he attributes fundamental importance to the opposition of linear and circular views of time, Mohler insists that the worldview of the Conservative Revolution cannot be reconciled with the Christian one. Evola agreed with this perspective in both versions of *Pagan Imperialism*.

Evola's essays which critically assess Italian Fascism and German National Socialism retain their importance, but for different reasons. His analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Italian Fascism remains of political importance in Italy, where the subject reoccurs again and again because of Fascism's foundational role in creating contemporary Italy. Evola's critical evaluation of National Socialism is of historical significance. After 1933, the voices and views of the Conservative Revolution were silenced or marginalised (or, in a few cases, turned into slogans that had been emptied of their original meaning, like Moeller van den Bruck's idea of a German Third Reich). Part of Evola's positive reception in Germany in the decade the followed Hitler's rise to power was due to his ability to express views, criticisms and a worldview that were not officially welcome and were even suppressed in the new Germany, because he was a foreigner.[19] Even more as an Italian, he represented a country that was showing the way to a creative future without democracy or progressivism.[20] Evola's books and lectures gave a voice to the worldview of the Conservative Revolution.

Notes on the Third Reich provides another statement of this worldview from the pen of one of the last survivors of the Conservative Revolution. After the Second World War, Spengler was dead, Carl Schmitt an outcast and Ernst Jünger devoted himself to developing his literary gifts. Evola's book on Jünger's *Der Arbeiter*[21] attempted to salvage important positive points from the high noon of the Conservative Revolution just before Hitler came to power. *Notes on the Third Reich*, on the other hand, preserves and renews the Conservative Revolution's critique of the regime that exploited and frustrated it. It confirms Armin Mohler's point that the Conservative Revolution should not be identified with National Socialism and, in fact, offered a thoughtful and principled critique of that movement and the government it established. This insight is of historical importance for those who desire to understand the past, as well as to do justice to the great writers and thinkers of the past.

In addition, however, *Notes on the Third Reich* expresses a critique of the regimes that preceded and followed the Third Reich, regimes under which Europeans and Americans now live. It is not only radical traditionalists who feel dissatisfaction with these social and political forms. An important American writer, Marilynne Robinson, has written about 'the general sense that we are suffering a radical moral decline, which is destroying the fabric of society, seriously threatening our sense of safety as well as of mutual respect and shared interest. Such anxieties can be dangerous and irrational — perhaps they are in most cases. But the evidence is impressive that we are now looking at real decay.'[22] These words may evoke the concept of *kali-yuga*. Robinson argues that we must take seriously again the tradition associated with John Calvin and the Puritans, one as unsatisfactory to Evola as to contemporary progressivists. Still, since her arguments were heard with respect, perhaps we are ready to listen to other voices that speak of different possibilities, both from the past and in the future. The writers, thinkers and activists of the Conservative Revolution between the two World Wars still give eloquent expression to these alternative possibilities, if we are willing to listen. Julius Evola speaks with them and for them.

E. Christian Kopff was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1946. He completed his Bachelor's degree *summa cum laude* at Haverford College, and his Ph.D. in Classics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is currently Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he has taught since 1973. He has served as Associate Director of the University's Honors Program since 1990 and Director of its Center for Western Civilization since 2004. He also works with the University of Urbino in Italy on ancient Greek metrics and lyric poetry. He is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome and has been awarded grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities. He is the author of *The Devil Knows Latin: Why America Needs the Classical Tradition* (ISI Books, 1999), editor of a critical edition of the Greek text of Euripides' *Bacchae* (Teubner, 1982), translator of Josef Pieper, *Tradition: Concept and Claim* (ISI Books, 2008) and has written articles and reviews on scholarly, pedagogical and popular topics. He is also the translator of Guillaume Faye's *Convergence of Catastrophes* (2012) and Julius Evola's *Fascism Viewed from the Right* (2013), both also published by Arktos.

Introduction

In these notes, German National Socialism will be made the object of a rather succinct examination. First of all, concerning a judgment from the point of view of the Right, on different aspects of this movement we will have to repeat what we have already said when considering Fascism in the previous essay.[23] There, among other things, we have had the chance to make some references to the orientations of the Third Reich and of some initiatives undertaken in it. Thus we shall dwell only on some differentiating elements.

Then it is necessary to remember that, in the case of the Third Reich, singling out concrete forces that are intrinsically valid and susceptible to being separated from what was contingent is more difficult than in the case of Fascism, and for various reasons. First, the negative elements that today are generally emphasised when people speak of 'Nazism' — concentration camps, persecution of the Jews, responsibility for starting the Second World War, Hitler's ideas — should be separated from the rest. Second, the central and overwhelming role that was held by a given individual in Germany, even more than in Italy — that is, Adolf Hitler — so much so that we can talk of a *Führerstaat*, or a *Führer* state, has cast everything else into the shadows for many. Third, in the case of the Third Reich abroad, but also in contemporary Germany, the entire period from the end of the Weimar Republic[24] to the Second World War has been hastily called 'Nazism,' as if we were dealing with something completely unitary and homogeneous. There is no appropriate consideration of the particular factors that played a role in the birth and construction of the Third Reich, with the notable tensions and divergences that subsisted behind the totalitarian structure.

This is the examination to which we ought to proceed, lingering over aspects that few know about in Italy, but that have a particular importance for our purposes. For this and for a general orientation, we will have to review the antecedents, and the complex ideological and political situation in Germany before Hitler came to power.

I

There is no need to dwell on the social, democratic, and liberal political forces of the parliamentary Weimar Republic. Their inadequacy, weakness and inconsistency became as increasingly obvious as their inability to master the social chaos that was the inevitable consequence of Germany's defeat, the collapse of the previous regime, the disastrous clauses of the Versailles Treaty, and the growing unemployment. This situation led to a situation where Marxism and, in part, Communism too, gained a more significant foothold in the post-war period than in all preceding German history. Moreover, the situation was a 'phenomenon of circumstances,' even if it could have led to decisive and alarming developments had not something intervened to change the course of events on the factual social level.

Hitler's party chose the name Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP), that is, literally, the National Socialist German Workers' Party. Hitler's propaganda appealed to the workers. He tried to attract the German working masses and draw them away from international Marxism, by offering them a 'national' and 'German' solution to their problems. Many writers have expressed the opinion that the combination or synthesis (already foreseen by Sorel)[25] of 'national' and 'social' (or 'socialistic') is in general the defining characteristic of the various 'fascisms' of the previous generation. This could have been the formula to which they owed their success and, in particular, the one thanks to which Hitler could dispose of a large, mass party as a force that prepared his rise to power. It is, however, superfluous to say that to reduce these movements to this point alone ignores the elements that, from our point of view, are the most interesting ones. We need to provide details about Germany.

In fact, it is necessary to understand what 'national' meant to Hitler, and for that we need to look at the antecedents. It can be said that in Germany, mass democratic nationalism of the modern type had made only a fleeting appearance. It was Napoleon, the 'revolutionary imperialist,' who provoked this phenomenon, almost by contagion or backlash, because it was in the wars of liberation against the French invaders that properly nationalistic sentiments arose among the Germans, beyond their traditional dynastic and

loyalist structures that had the state and not the ‘people’ or the ‘nation’ as the centre of gravity. But ‘nationalism’ in this sense, with a democratic basis, did not go beyond the passing phenomenon of the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 in connection with the revolutionary movements that raged all over Europe in that period.[26] (It is significant that the King of Prussia, Frederick William IV,[27] turned down the offer, made by that Parliament, of making him the leader of all Germany because, by accepting it, he would also have accepted the democratic principle — power conferred by a popular representative assembly — and renounced his legitimate right to rule, admittedly restricted to Prussia alone.) Bismarck,[28] when he created the Second Reich,[29] did not give it a ‘national’ basis, and saw in the corresponding ideology the beginning of dangerous disorders in the European order as well, while the conservatives of the *Kreuzzeitung*[30] accused nationalism of being a ‘naturalistic’ and regressive phenomenon, which was foreign to the highest tradition and conception of the state.

There is, on the other hand, a different current that we must take into consideration, although it was previously restricted to rather insignificant groups. We need to indicate the meaning of ‘national’ as expressed by the German word *völkisch*, which was used in these circles. Here we can speak of ‘ethnic nationalism,’ insofar as the *Volk* (from which come the words *völkisch* and *Volkstum*)[31] was understood as a kind of entity defined by a common stock whose identity would be maintained through the ages. We could also refer to the romantic conception of the nation, the concept of *Volk* formulated by Fichte[32] in his *Addresses to the German Nation*[33] in connection with the struggle for liberation. Arndt,[34] Jahn[35] and Lange[36] developed the same theme after Fichte; the Deutschbund[37] was founded (as early as 1894) and then a *Völkische Bewegung*,[38] as the idea of the race-nation was not limited only to ‘internal use,’ but acquired at times pan-German implications. There were also anti-Semitic positions in the name of the *Volk*. In a certain fashion we have here the origins of German ‘racism.’

At any rate, ‘national’ in Germany did not have the same meaning it had in western Europe. It is in the *völkisch* idea that we can see the precursor that played an important role in Hitlerism. Hitler was always talking about the *Volk*. The *Volksgemeinschaft*, or community understood in terms of the *Volk*, a race-people, will be the slogan of his Third Reich, where, anyhow, as we shall see, it will play a rather problematic role.

Thus the connection established by Hitler between 'national' and 'social' had a special character. While, on the one hand, he stigmatised Marxism as an anti-national movement that was fatal for German *Volkstum*, on the other, he appealed to a type of German national and racial pride and proclaimed a 'national socialism' that, as the original name of the party indicates, was first of all essentially thinking of the masses and the working class. This was therefore the first component of Nazism. In general, in the condition of 'rootlessness,' the alienation of the individual and the masses, a type of mystic aura surrounded it.

After this we must consider other elements and precursors, which are rather diverse in spirit and in origin. After the First World War the situation in Germany was distinctly different from the one in Italy. As we have said, Mussolini had to create his state almost from nothing, in the sense that when it came to fighting red subversion and putting the state back on its feet, he could not appeal to a tradition in the highest sense of the term. In short, what was being threatened was only a prolonging of the democratic and liberal little Italy of the nineteenth century, with a heritage of the *Risorgimento*[39] that echoed the ideologies of the French Revolution and a monarchy that reigned but did not govern, and did not possess solid social articulations. The situation was different in Germany. Even after the military collapse and the revolution of 1918,[40] and despite the social chaos, remnants survived with deep roots in that hierarchical world, which was at times still feudal, focused on the values of the state and its authority that were part of the earlier tradition, in particular of Prussianism. This was the tradition because of which the Central Powers[41] had appeared in the eyes of the western democracies as an 'intolerable obscurantist residue.' In fact, in central Europe the ideas of the French Revolution had never taken root as they had in the other European countries.

In addition, even after 1918 and before the advent of Hitler there were those, especially intellectuals, who, beginning from that traditional legacy, sought to promote a movement that wanted to restore and, at the same time, renew. It should be considered a revolution, however, not in the progressive and subversive sense, but rather as the elimination of the negative, of what was sclerotic and that in the previous regime had lost its original vital potential, responding instead to the advent of the new industrial era. This is the source of the frequently used formula of 'Conservative Revolution.'[42]

It was not simply a return to yesterday. It wanted to conserve not certain historical forms, but that which had an enduring value. Moeller van den Bruck,[43] who died in 1925 and was one of the principal exponents of this current, wrote, 'To be conservative does not mean to remain attached to what has been but to live and act starting from what has a lasting value.' The spiritual orientation was prevalent in these circles. The emphasis was placed on a revolution that was above all spiritual.

The term 'Third Reich,' which was destined to be taken up by Hitler, was coined by Moeller van den Bruck himself and was the title of one of his books, published in 1923. (Another book, which was published posthumously, was entitled *Das Ewige Reich*,[44] that is, the eternal Reich. It is possible that some of Hitler's 'millenarian' obsessions were connected to this book.) In these groups they talked of working to evoke a 'secret Germany' (*Geheimes Deutschland*) that maintained itself through historical contingencies. The First Reich was the Holy Roman Empire;[45] the second was the German Empire founded by Bismarck in 1871, which survived under Wilhelm II[46] to the end of the First World War. The Third Reich was supposed to rise to surpass everything that was inauthentic in the era of Kaiser Wilhelm (Wilhelmism). Since the Weimar Republic was considered a simple interregnum, the field was free for a new political creation. These notions were in many ways typical of the circles of intellectuals, but they also had a certain influence as precursors of the Third Reich.

Another current instead presented aspects that were mostly existential. Its origin must be brought back to what was called the 'generation of the frontline.' Germany in the period right after the First World War saw the appearance of E. M. Remarque,[47] the author of the sadly famous defeatist book *All Quiet on the Western Front*.[48] There was also, however, an anti-Remarque position which professed the faith of combatants who saw the war as an *experience*, and had not lived through something that 'had broken them even when the cannons spared them' (as Remarque put it). Instead, for them war was rather a test that, in the best of them, had provoked a process of purification and liberation. This was the idea of a Thomas Mann,[49] a Franz Schauwecker,[50] an H. Fischer,[51] but especially Ernst Jünger,[52] a volunteer combatant decorated and wounded many times over before he became a writer. For Jünger, the Great War had been destructive and nihilistic, only, however, in relation to everything that is mere rhetoric, the

‘idealism’ of the big hypocritical words, the bourgeois conception of existence. For a certain generation it was rather the principle of a ‘heroic realism,’ the crucible in which, ‘among the storms of steel,’ a new human type had taken form, which Jünger described and to which he believed the future was destined to belong. In fact, the development of analogous ideas in a context that was no longer limited to war, but embraced all existence, was given by Jünger in his book, *Der Arbeiter*,[53] which created quite a sensation in Germany in the period just before Hitler’s rise to power. Although not speaking in the more conservative terms of the other tendencies of which we have just spoken, but insisting rather on the necessity of first reaching the zero point of the values of the bourgeois world with a ‘positive nihilism,’ his ultimate prospective was equally, in a fundamental sense, that of a new, rigorously organised Reich. Its backbone and formative force was the new human type.

Apart from these theoretical formulations, ‘the unbroken generation of the frontline’ had already given life to the so-called Freikorps, groups of volunteers who, in the immediate aftermath of 1918, fought against Bolshevism in the eastern and Baltic regions, which had transient boundaries (Captain Hermann Ehrhardt’s brigade was famous),[54] and also internally, contributing to the suppression of revolutionary efforts by Communists and ‘Spartacists.’

An even greater importance on the political level belonged to the forces of the veterans of the national Right that formed the Stahlhelm[55] (the ‘Steel Helmet’) of Seldte[56] and Düsterberg[57] and the political party of the ‘German Nationalists’ (DNVP)[58] of Hugenberg.[59] They were naturally joined by the primary traditional and conservative force in existence, the Reichswehr[60] or army. The army was officially loyal to the legal government of the Weimar Republic, but internally it did not accept the new regime and maintained the ideas, ideals and *ethos* of the previous tradition, which had shaped the officer corps. In the spirit of Prussianism, the Reichswehr did not consider itself as a simple military force at the disposition of a bourgeois parliamentary regime, but rather as the representative of a given vision of life and also of a political idea. With its attitude, imbued by a rigorous sense of honour and discipline, the Reichswehr was to maintain these characteristics even during the successive vicissitudes of the Third Reich, for the most part.

The President of the Republic, Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg,[61] was a representative of the Reichswehr. There were therefore natural and traditional connections between the army and the nobility (which had one of its principal centres in the Herrenklub[62] of Berlin), and in particular with the *Junker*,[63] while a similar Rightist perspective was shared by many career diplomats, upper bureaucrats and managers of big business.

II

This was the general context presented by anti-Marxist and non-democratic Germany before the National Socialist Party established itself on the national scene. If there had been an agreement among these various currents and, especially, if there had been men with the stature of leaders capable of confronting the situation, a ‘conservative revolution’ would have been possible after the burial of the Weimar Republic and the liquidation of social democracy.

But things went in another direction. Hitler’s direct action on the masses was increasingly successful, and after the elections of 1930 he found himself at the head of a party and a parliamentary block (107 seats in the Reichstag)[64] that had to be taken seriously.

It was then that a situation arose that, to a certain degree, should have been fatal. Hitler’s gradual conquest of power took place in the context of perfect legality, with absolutely no need of any equivalent of the Fascist March on Rome.[65] The forces of the Right we have discussed, which still maintained solid positions, held that the best solution would be a coalition. Their intention, however, was, to a certain degree, to use National Socialism, which, in its turn, recognised the impossibility of continuing its ascent without an understanding with the German nationalists and the Centre.[66] Meanwhile, Hindenburg himself, on the advice of von Papen,[67] who was also an exponent of the Right, conferred the chancellorship on Hitler, with van Papen serving as vice-chancellor. The presence in the first cabinet of Reich ministers like Seldte, Düsterberg, von Neurath,[68] von Schwerin-Krosigk,[69] von Blomberg and other prominent Rightists was believed to be enough to keep Hitler in his place. Moreover, the principal developments that were to precipitate the crisis and lead to a totalitarian Nazi Reich took place while Hindenburg was still the head of state, with his support and his sanction. Since Rightists, too, believed that the primary tasks were the national concentration of forces and the elimination of both subversion and the incoherent parliamentary democracy, they left it up to Hitler to accomplish this.

The first step was accomplished in February 1933. In response to the burning of the Reichstag (an event about which complete clarity has never

been achieved, but which was at that time attributed to a Communist)[70] a 'Decree for the Protection of the People and the State'[71] was proclaimed, which was directed essentially against the Communists. It also contemplated the suspension of some articles of the constitution. The decree, which was signed by Hindenburg, had the status of law. The Communists were not the only ones to be effected by the decree because it was enforced not only by the police but also by Hitler's SA[72] and SS on their own initiative, and this led to the perpetration of excesses. If, however, we are to formulate a judgment from the general point of view of the Right, we should say that in every state worthy of the name, measures like this one are necessary under certain circumstances. It is because nothing similar took place in Italy, to the greater glory of the holy democracy, that the cancer represented by Communism and its fellow travellers has spread to an alarming degree in post-war Italy and has sunk roots so deep that its extirpation seems unlikely without a civil war. We should note, on the other hand, that the post-war German Federal Republic (with its capital in Bonn) has shown greater foresight and determination. From the point of view of democracy itself, but with a better understanding of democracy, it used its authority to suppress the Communist Party.[73]

The Reichstag was dissolved, new elections were called and already at the parliament's second session it was asked to approve the so-called *Ermächtigunggesetz*,[74] a law that invested Hitler and his government with full powers at the expense of 'popular representation' in the demo-liberal sense. The law passed with 441 votes in favour against 94 opposed. We need to remember that in the Reichstag, beside the National Socialists there were still representatives of the Right and the Centre. The Communist deputies were absent and some socialists, but even if they had been present, the law would still have passed with the required two-thirds majority.

Following this vote, Hitler was free to begin implementing his programme. Hindenburg, who was still head of state, played a role in the dissolution of the various parties in the name of the so-called *Gleichschaltung*, a general framework that was supposed to signify the unification of the different political forces into a single national front for the reconstruction of Germany. Even the *Stahlhelm* and the Rightist organisation of the German nationalists agreed to disband in obedience to the new watchword of unification. Finally, on 14 July 1933, a decree

formally put an end to the regime of the parties by prohibiting membership in any party except the National Socialist Party. There followed the 'one party' system, conceived as the supporting and organising political force of the Reich.

We have already expressed our judgment on this system in our remarks on Fascism. In Germany's case we need to point out, however, that the end of the parliament made up of parties did not lead to an alternative, as in Italy, with the founding of a Chamber of Corporations[75] or an analogous body. Only single persons and single offices were, eventually, exponents of different directions, and the final decision was always left to Hitler, without the existence of a true consultative body on the institutional level. The idea that, in the future, the Reichstag would have become at least the expression of different interparty currents, remained a pious hope. If, in the Nazi Third Reich that followed the parliamentary regime, there were tensions that sometimes made its synergy and unity appear miraculous, they remained limited to the upper levels of the party. These tensions existed, for instance, between Göring and Goebbels, between Ribbentrop and Himmler, between Ley[76] and some exponents of big business, aside from the tension between the Reichswehr and the SA, which was soon settled in a drastic way that we shall discuss later.

The law conferring full powers upon Hitler remained in force until the very end in 1945, and not only for the four-year period requested by Hitler for the 'reconstruction of Germany.' Even without adhering to the fetish of the so-called 'rule of law'[77] of liberal inspiration, we ought to see this situation as excessive. It is not right to perpetuate and virtually institutionalise what can be legitimate only in particular temporary situations. The ethical bonds, which are necessarily indeterminate and elastic, between the responsibility held by one part (from on high), and trust and fidelity by the other, cannot replace definite statements of law that, even in an authoritarian state of the Right, must be established to prevent 'dictatorial' leaders. The coexistence of a superior authority, at least like the one Hindenburg incarnated, appears to be an indispensable condition.

An initiative Hitler undertook already in the period when Hindenburg was still head of state, and which had an anti-traditional character, was extending the *Gleichschaltung* also to the *Länder*, the individual regional entities that in their partial autonomy and sovereignty corresponded to the

various kingdoms, principalities and free cities of the federation of which the Second Reich was composed, with Prussia enjoying a preeminent position among them. These were abolished one after another, and the individual *Länder*[78] were integrated in the central government by taking on the character of *Gaue*,[79] areas headed by functionaries of the Reich's central government, who were no longer representatives of the corresponding communities. Prussia was the first to undergo this fate under the leadership, unfortunately, of von Papen, a Rightist. Even Hindenburg said nothing to oppose this development, which amounted to a policy of centralising and levelling. Once again the excuse given was the need of a total organisation of all forces with the goal being the maximisation of efficiency. Emphasis was placed on the fact that by this policy Germany had become, for the first time in its history, unified as a 'nation' (in the sense of modern nationalism). From our point of view, however, the negative aspect of the initiative is clear, since the previous system of a superior central authority combined with a group of smaller political units that enjoyed partial autonomy had an organic and qualitative character, which is traditional in a superior sense. In this regard Germany had presented, among all the modern European nations, an outstanding example.

[NOTE: In relation to this German 'national' unification effected by Hitler, we can point out the opposition between the type of Italy's unification, which had an analogous character, and the one effected by Bismarck with the creation of the Second Reich. This last unification had an organic character from above and was based on the agreement of the sovereigns of individual countries that maintained their traditional structure, and not through the 'people.' On the contrary, Italy became one, in the so-called *Risorgimento*, under the standard of ideologies that went back to the French Revolution and according to the 'nationalism' that derived from it.]

An episode that should be recalled here and that indicates the double face of Hitlerism in this first period is constituted by the events of 30 June 1934. On that day, and during what was called 'the Night of the Long Knives,'[80] a certain number of personalities were eliminated in short order, especially by the SS. Elements of various political orientations figured among them: in

addition to the ex-Chancellor, General von Schleicher,[81] there were also men of the Right like von Bose,[82] von der Decken,[83] von Alvensleben,[84] and von Papen's secretary, Edgar Jung.[85] The chief reason given for the operation, however, was as follows: among the SA, the Brownshirts, whose head was Ernst Roehm,[86] the idea had spread of a 'second revolution,' or a second revolutionary period. They denounced the survival in the Reich of 'reactionary' groups, meaning those of the Right, and Hitler's chumminess with the 'barons of the army and business.' They had their sights principally on the Reichswehr with its old hierarchies and its connections with the aristocracy and the *Junker*. They wanted to replace the Reichswehr, the remnant of the old regime, with a new 'popular army,' a revolutionary *Volksheer*[87] with a purely National Socialist spirit. (As a concept this idea was close to the one proposed today in Maoist China.)[88] To the old 'reactionary' type of official they opposed a new National Socialist 'political soldier.' In a word, 30 June 1934 essentially represented the elimination of this radical current in the Party and of its purported conspiracy. Roehm himself, the head of the SA and Hitler's intimate friend, was killed, as was Gregor Strasser, the organiser of the Brownshirts in Berlin.[89] It is significant that Hindenburg, who was obviously looking only at the aspect of Hitler's drastic action that was in the interests of the class Hindenburg represented and which was followed by the disarming of the SA, did not hesitate to thank Hitler for his 'courageous intervention against the den of traitors' who had sought to undermine the unity of the Reich. Göring, too, received a similar message from Hindenburg.

With the death of Hindenburg on 2 August 1934 events began to speed up and produced institutional changes that led to the development of a pure totalitarian *Führer-Staat* (*Führer* state). Hitler claimed for himself and united in his person the positions of President of the Reich (which had been Hindenburg's position) and Chancellor, which he already held, while he remained supreme head of the National Socialist Party. But in this respect also, he did not disregard democratic legal sanction. A national plebiscite approved the innovation with 90% of the vote. (This cannot be explained by coercion alone — the percentages were not very different in regions or cities still under foreign control[90] and were due, perhaps, to a spectacular propaganda apparatus.) *Inter alia*, Hitler thus became also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and additionally received the oath of

‘unconditional obedience,’ an oath that, given all the weight it had from tradition, must have played a significant role in future developments.

Judged straightforwardly, the Third Reich presented itself in terms of a popular dictatorship, since power was in the hands of a single individual lacking any superior chrism,[91] drawing the principle of its ‘legitimacy’ uniquely from the *Volk* and its consensus. This is the essence of the so-called *Führerprinzip*.[92] It was supposed to relate to a tradition from the times of the ancient Germani,[93] with the chief and his followers united by a bond of fidelity. In all this, several important issues were forgotten, however. First, at that time this bond was established only in an emergency or in view of definite military ends and, like the dictatorship in the early Roman period, the character of *Führer* (*dux*[94] or *heretigo*) did not have a permanent character. Second, the ‘followers’ were the heads of the various tribes, not a mass, the *Volk*. Third, in the ancient German constitution, in addition to the exceptional instances in which, in certain circumstances as we have mentioned, the chief could demand an unconditional obedience — in addition to the *dux* or *heretigo* — there was the *rex*,[95] possessed of a superior dignity based on his origin. All this we have already mentioned in our discussion of the ‘dyarchy’ that was established in Fascism by the coexistence of the monarchy, which we have seen as positive. As for Hitler, he nourished a fundamental aversion to the monarchy and, as we have noted, his polemic against the Habsburgs,[96] for instance, was of an unparalleled vulgarity. For Hitler, the *Volk* alone was the principle of legitimacy. He was established as its direct representative and guide, without intermediaries, and it was to follow him unconditionally. No higher principle existed or was tolerated by him. Therefore it is perfectly correct to speak of a consolidated populist dictatorship employing the tools of a single party and the myth of the *Volk*. Not only the ancient German traditions, but also the very concept of Reich and, as we shall see, the concept of race were brought by Hitler to the level of the masses, which implied their degradation and distortion. Still, in this context they became tools of great power. Last but not least, Hitler’s success derived from having restored for the masses, the *Volk*, the validity of ideas and symbols of a higher German legacy that kept its power, so to speak, in the collective unconscious despite everything, a power to which Hitler appealed.

Considering these aspects, as is obvious, very little can be gathered about the Third Reich that is objectively valid, beyond historical contingency. Everything gravitated around a man with exceptional abilities for captivating, transporting, arousing and fanaticising the people, while he himself presented under more than one aspect the traits of a possessed person, as if an extraordinary force were acting through him, giving him lucidity and iron logic in action, but depriving him of every sense of limit. These are the character traits that differ strikingly between Hitler and Mussolini. In Mussolini, the outstanding traits were those of a person who maintained control and a certain distance when exploiting opportunities. Naturally, in a system gravitating to this degree around a *Führer* like the Third Reich, a stable future was not conceivable. Constitutionally it was possible to have a type of tribunate of the people. In reality, however, had the war not ended in military defeat, a vacuum would have appeared after Hitler's death, since it would not have been possible to bring to power, in a continuing succession, men possessing Hitler's exceptional individual qualities, which alone assured him power and made him the system's centre of gravity. The *Führer-Staat* would necessarily have had to yield to a different order. As long as Hitler lived and fortune was on his side, his galvanising power succeeded in holding everything together and inspiring unbelievable achievements up to the last hour, up to the edge of the abyss. The complete ideological collapse of Germany after 1945, however, when that tension failed — not comparable to the one that followed its defeat in the First World War — shows how superficial was the effect of his magnetic action on the masses in spite of the power of 'myths' and the strict totalitarian organisation.

It was then, at the foundation of the *Führer-Staat* after Hindenburg's death, that diverse exponents of the 'Conservative Revolution' recognised clearly the gap that existed between their ideals and the new state, seeing in this state a falsification or profanation of their ideals and blaming it for a break with the preceding tradition. There were some who left Germany (like Hermann Rauschning,[97] former Nazi President of the Senate of Danzig, who attacked the Third Reich violently in 1936 in a book published abroad entitled *The Revolution of Nihilism*: *Appearances and Reality in the Third Reich*.[98] Others stayed in Germany, but withdrew into silence and occupied themselves with literature (like Jünger and von Salomon).[99] Still others

suffered persecution. Some — and not a few — remained politically active because they hoped for a progressive rectification and accentuation of everything in the Third Reich that, in spite of everything, possessed a certain connection with their ideas.

In fact, in the Prussian tradition there had been a principle of acting *for* the people, while holding it at a distance, but not *through* the people, which would mean being led by it after an adequate politicising and enabling, according to the chief Jacobin[100] model. This principle was the foundation of what was called the 'Prussian socialism'[101] or even the 'social monarchy' of the Hohenzollerns.[102] With the *Führer-Staat*, the authority that, at least keeping to the corresponding ideology, was drawn from the masses or the collective force of the *Volk*, and with the unarticulated pairing of *Volk-Führer*, Germany found itself in a line opposed to the one that had given life to Prussia and had been fundamental in the Second Reich as well. In fact, Prussia had been the creation of a dynasty that had the nobility, the army and the higher bureaucracy for its backbone. The primary element was not the 'nation' or the *Volk*. Rather the state, more than the land or the *ethnos*,[103] constituted the real foundation and unifying principle. There was none of that in Hitlerism — at least in the area of general political ideology. The state was conceived as a secondary and instrumental reality, while the primary formative, moving and bearing force was supposed to be the *Volk* with the *Führer* as its representative and incarnation. This is why some have correctly emphasised the difference between the doctrines of National Socialism and Italian Fascism, because in Fascism's doctrine, although it could not count on a tradition even remotely comparable with the Prussian tradition as its antecedent, the state — as we have seen — enjoyed primacy in respect to 'nation' and 'people.' For some Nazi writers, whose infatuation was equal to their disavowal of the history of their own country, this aspect of Fascism was supposed to be a 'Roman' trait, which was extraneous to 'German nature.' This was the source of the attack on supra-national state structures, like that formerly presented by the Habsburg Empire.[104] The fundamental slogan for this system was *ein Reich*, *ein Volk*, *ein Führer* — that is, one people unified in one Reich following one *Führer*. Because of the blind insistence on uniting all German elements living outside the country's borders, it was among the causes that, after the brief mirage of the *Gross Deutschland*, Great Germany, was to lead to an adventure that ended

in catastrophe, while it was destined to contradict itself when, despite everything, because of the re-emergence of Pan-Germanism or a desire for hegemony, or the expansionist theory of the so-called 'living space,'[105] the Third Reich reasserted its power over territories beyond the limits of *Deutschtum*, ethnic 'Germanicity,' with which, according to the older formula, it should have been contented.

Casting an eye retrospectively on this period, Ernst von Salomon, a writer who had served in Captain Ehrhardt's brigade and had been implicated in the assassination of Walther Rathenau,[106] said, 'We understood that the first serious and significant attempt of the national movement to provoke a change in Germany's situation by proceeding from on high, from the state in other words, in more or less the same sense desired by the exponents of a "conservative revolution" had failed because of this man, Adolf Hitler.' Von Salomon, expressing the point of view of other personalities of the same group, added, 'Every attempt to move the essential accent from the state to the people, from authority to the collective, should be considered an absurd and abject betrayal of the true goal of the national movement… There could not be, from the historical point of view, any bridge between the state idea and the populist one of the essence of the nation. This fact, unfortunately, was disguised by the disorienting circumstance that the populist formula used the same vocabulary and boasted of being a renewed conception of the state.'[107] Von Salomon, however, together with others (for instance, Armin Mohler)[108] also recognised that the failure was due to the fact that Rightist circles refused to use the means employed by Hitler to have the masses with them (nor did they possess corresponding abilities). To allow themselves to be carried away by a mass movement that had to be politicised and fanaticised with propaganda, setting every scruple aside, was contrary to their anti-demagogic mentality and seemed to them a 'rather dirty' affair. This is the source of their position of inferiority in front of Hitler, who, on the contrary, had understood the situation tied to the times. As we have said, before the facts became apparent, those who were the guardians of tradition were under the illusion that they could make use of Hitler as an instrument (just as the King of Italy believed he could use Mussolini to create a national revolution in his stead). As we have seen, however, more or less the opposite happened.

III

If, however, the Third Reich abandoned the tradition of the Prussian state, it picked up and used quite a few of the fundamental traits of the Prussian character and lifestyle. These traits, when Prussia ceased to be an independent kingdom with the founding of the Second Empire, went on to be formative in other parts of Germany. So if one wanted to seek out the ultimate formula for the success of the Third Reich, one should look for it in the union of two elements. The first was fanaticizing the *Volk*, the masses, with the cult of the *Führer*, which at times reached extremes bordering on hysteria. Anyone, for instance, who has heard Hess, Hitler's lieutenant, shouting hysterically at the Party's convention at Nuremberg, 'Germany is Hitler! Hitler is Germany!' which was received by the frenetic screams of hundreds of thousands of people, must have got the impression of a real phenomenon of possession. The second element, however, associated with everything that was encouraged by directing mass manifestations of an unparalleled impressiveness, was the legacy of some 'Prussian' dispositions, which tried to keep itself alive in the people and in the very cadres of the Party with a parallel action. Meanwhile, it continued to serve especially as guardian of the Reichswehr, which, even though 'integrated' into the Third Reich, maintained its own internal autonomy and even moved itself to a certain distance, while Hitler, using rather indirect means honestly speaking, removed generals von Blomberg[109] and von Fritsch[110] from their positions as commanders and replaced them with himself.[111]

It is the concordant action of these two factors that coherently sustained Hitler's state by encouraging exceptional performances. It is very silly to think that this state could have existed only thanks to a regime of terror and oppression. Such a regime could not have produced the impulse for so many accomplishments, such as earning the sincere admiration of so many foreigners at the Olympics of 1936,[112] nor can it explain the virtues of the entire population and the armed forces, which required six years of ruthless war and the combined forces of almost the entire world to defeat the Third

Reich militarily, and thanks to which Germany held firm almost to the last without a complaint or a rebellion, and indeed with miraculous recoveries after every destruction and horror. There are examples such as those of the Hitler Youth in combat, who were certainly not under the threat of the pistols of the Gestapo, and who participated in the desperate defence of Berlin, where they hunted the gigantic Soviet T-34 tanks. One of their divisions in the Teutoburg Forest compelled an American armoured division to retreat after inflicting heavy losses on them, earning the Iron Cross.[113] We can also speak of the fanaticism aroused by the arts and spells of a great wizard. The whole cannot be explained, however, without the other side, a love for discipline, the spirit of impersonal and eventually heroic dedication and fidelity, and so a factor essentially different from fanaticism, which must be related to the *second* of the components we have discussed. Naturally this is also the point of view of those who have accused Hitler of having abused the intrinsic gifts of the German and using them to thrust Germany along a road that led to ruin.

But these aspects fall outside the primary field within which we would like to maintain our considerations. Thus we ought to pass on to examine briefly and judge some concrete aspects of the Third Reich and its institutions.

On the subject of social assistance for the benefit of the lower classes, Hitler's Germany placed itself ahead of all nations, with only Fascist Italy at its side. This was a direct part of Hitler's politics, understood as having the working class with him. He assured them a maximum of bourgeois comfort, and by adopting the insipid slogan of the 'nobility of labour' gave workers a particular 'consciousness.' Sometimes, however, he went too far, which gave us the first taste of the presumptuous rabble with more money than they know what to do with, and which, like a real plague in our days, proliferates in the 'consumer society.' Anyone who has seen the masses of 'Aryan' *Volksgenossen* (the comrades of the stock, the *Volk*) of the KdF[114] (a sort of first class 'workers' club' or Nazi ENAL, the National Agency for Workers' Assistance)[115] and the presumption of the evolved and 'deproletarianised' Berlin worker cannot suppress a shiver of horror at the prospect of a Germany that might have developed in that direction.

[NOTE: In the Nazi period there was a popular joke that was based on wordplay. Question: What is the difference between Russia and Germany? Answer: Russia is a *Proletarierstaat* (a proletarian state), Germany a *Prolet-arierstaat* (which is the same word, but when divided in this way it means 'state of Aryan proletarians').]

Different Nazi initiatives for National Socialist solidarity often had a compulsory character, while the desire was to make them appear spontaneous. Especially deplorable among all of them was the institution of the *Reichsarbeitsdienst*, or Reich Labour Service, which a law of 26 June 1935 made obligatory for all youth of both sexes. The act aimed at consolidating the *Volksgemeinschaft*, that is, the social community under the banner of the *Volk* (but not without a certain Jacobin sadism). It made service work that had at first been voluntary into a general obligation, and imposed on every young person of both sexes a certain period of manual work, together with other youths from the most diverse classes — a girl of the aristocracy could thus find herself living in a community with a country girl or a working-class girl in a farm or a factory. Naturally, often the effect of this 'tool of political national education' was the opposite of the law's intent. This is not the only case of that totalitarian intrusion of the public into the private sphere that we have already faulted in some aspects of Fascism as well, such as, for instance, Fascism's conception of the schoolmarmish 'ethical state,' its demographic campaign to increase the birth-rates and its virtual imposition of *voi*, the second person plural, in polite speech.[116] The presence of a proletarian aspect in Nazism is undeniable, as in the figure of Hitler himself, who had none of the traits of a 'gentleman,' of an aristocratic type *di razza*.[117] This proletarian aspect and even vulgarity of National Socialism was often noticed, especially in Austria after its annexation to the Reich and after the phase of a rash 'national' infatuation of Austrians for 'Greater Germany.'

Gleichschaltung, the levelling integration aiming at a totalitarian unification, also had negative effects in some particular domains. For instance, it led to the compulsory dissolution of student clubs that with their customs, traditions of honour and *esprit de corps* (especially among the so-called *Korpsstudenten*)[118] had been one of the sites of character formation

for a certain class. The entire student youth was instead herded into a single organisation controlled by the Party.

As for what concerns the economic domain, Hitler had already affirmed the pre-eminence of the political problems and a definite vision of life over economic problems. He had proclaimed that 'the state has nothing to do with any particular economic idea or with a particular development of the economy' and that 'the state is an organism of the *Volk* and not an economic organisation.'[119] For some time he had warned of the danger that the trade union movement might become an influential political force that could pave the way for a Marxist takeover of the state. 'The National Socialist trade union,' he had written, 'is not a tool of the class struggle, but rather an organisation for professional representation.'[120] Once he was securely in power, Hitler courageously completed the decisive step. After May 1 was solemnly declared the 'national labour holiday' (in imitation of the analogous initiative by Italian Fascism) with a demonstration that aroused great enthusiasm, the next day all the headquarters of the trade unions were occupied in a surprise action and, as an added precaution, many trade union leaders were arrested.[121] It was announced that 'free' trade unions had been dissolved and their property had been confiscated by the state. On the basis of what we have said earlier when speaking of Fascist institutions, an action like this should be considered, from our point of view, in completely positive terms. After this, Germany proceeded to reorganise labour and the economy by means of the 'corporatist' reconstruction of businesses. We shall not dwell on this aspect of the Third Reich's legislation, because we have already spoken of it in faulting the defects of Fascist state corporatism. Let us therefore recall only that the reform had for its virtual model the Medieval organic and corporatist structures, which various exponents of the 'national revolution' reappraised and adopted as a precursor and as the foundation of a 'third way' beyond degenerate capitalism and Marxism. The spirit of the reform was to move beyond classism and the class struggle within each business insofar as each of them were to develop a solidarity between the interests and performances of all its elements and reaffirm the *Führerprinzip*, that is, the relationship between a chief (*Führer*, entrepreneur) and his 'retinue' (management, the staff), who were united by relations of mutual fidelity. To iron out eventual disagreements and what could affect interests even on the national level, 'labour trustees' were

appointed by the Party. Even the possibility of appeal to a 'Social Honour Court' was considered.[122] According to the terms of the law of 20 January 1934, 'In the enterprise the entrepreneur as chief (*Führer*) of the business and the staff and workers as his retinue (*Gefolgschaft*) will work concretely to accomplish the goals of the enterprise and for the common profit of the nation and the state.'[123] The malfunctioning of a big company was no longer to be considered a mere private affair, but was looked upon as a type of political crime. In principle there was no obligation for individual businesses as autonomous unities to join the 'German Labour Front.'[124] Further, joining the Front did not entail a top-down regulation, as in Fascist corporatism. The original programme of the Party had already indicated one of its objectives as being *Brechung der Zinsknechtschaft*, an expression that could be translated as the elimination of the serfdom imposed by pure, finance capitalists by means of interest rates.[125] In other words, if the entrepreneur-capitalist was respected and his authority was reinforced with a political and moral chrism, the Party opposed the simple financier-capitalist 'of the Hebrew type,' who was foreign to the productive process. This orientation can be ascribed to the credit of National Socialism.

In addition, under these new laws, the private economy in the Third Reich could develop with great liberty. The large industrial complexes remained, and they reinforced and enlivened that sense of solidarity of the various elements that, in great part, had already previously characterised them, beyond Marxism and trade unionism. The government did not proceed to take over businesses in the name of the state, the nation or society. Some radical articles of the Party's program (articles 13 and 14)[126] in this area were set aside. The principle of 'levelling integration' found here salutary limits, so that there are those who would speak of Hitler's collusion with the 'barons of industry.' In reality, it was a question of a national front where each stood at his post and had a fruitful and responsible liberty of initiative. This system showed its greatest efficacy in the Third Reich and passed every test until the end. Unemployment not only disappeared rapidly, but there were sometimes insufficient workers for the tasks to which the state was committed for the completion of its plans for reconstruction, development and national greatness.

Concerning trade policy, to a certain degree the Third Reich followed the principle of autarchy to assure a maximum degree of economic

independence. Hjalmar Schacht,[127] a man of the Right and a prestigious restorer of the German economy during the Weimar Republic, formulated Schacht's Law: 'We should not buy from countries where the goods are cheapest, but instead from those where we can pay for them primarily with our own exports.'

Another positive aspect of the Third Reich concerns the defence of the peasant or small farmer. In this regard it is necessary to remember the dignity that the central European *Bauer*, or small farmer, had preserved and that differentiated him from the small farmer of southern Latin countries, where the title of 'peasant' (*contadino*) is almost synonymous with impoverished. A German farmer could proclaim with pride, 'I come from an old family of peasants.' Hitler followed the ideas of R. Walther Darré,[128] whom he made Reich Minister for Agriculture, in what concerns 'blood and soil.'[129] A farming community that remained faithful to its land was seen as the source of the healthiest forces of blood, race and *Volk*. On this subject, Darré had written a book[130] where he sought to justify this idea with reference to the ancient Indo-European ('Aryan') cultures. (He wrote another, more recent book — it was published in 1930 — with the title *A New Nobility Based on Blood and Earth*.)[131] There were precursors for this idea in Germany. We can recall the 'anti-modernist' ideas of W. H. Riehl,[132] who saw in the peasant the only social stratum beside the nobility that was 'not rootless.' They even coined the watchword, 'freedom of the Earth from money,' which some groups had even tried to translate into practice in a utopian fashion with corresponding 'colonies' (*Siedelungen*). In addition, the deplorable situation had been drastically outlined already toward the end of the nineteenth century in a rather popular novel by W. von Polenz[133] called *Der Büttnerbauer*,[134] which described the tragedy of an old peasant whose family farm, because of the debts he was forced to contract, had been mortgaged and then sold by the moneylender (a Jew — using one of the typical Jewish stereotypes) to a group of speculators that built a factory on it. When he saw this, the old peasant committed suicide. In the period of the Weimar Republic, however, in some regions like Schleswig-Holstein, there were even revolutionary movements of peasants against the sequestrations and mortgages to which their property had been exposed not only because of debt, but also heavy taxation.

At any rate, the Third Reich, although far from averse to industry, energetically undertook to prevent 'the uprooting of the peasants' (therefore, implicitly, their exodus to cities) and to protect the natural base of their existence, that is, their own property, not only against expropriation and economic speculation, but also against the breaking up of farmland and debt. At the centre stood the concept of *Erbhof*, or an inalienable hereditary plot or farm, which was transmitted to a single heir, specifically whoever was most qualified (which corresponded to a centuries-old custom); to preserve through the generations, 'the inheritance of the stock in the hands of free peasants.' The state was ready to help, when certain circumstances threatened the existence and integrity of this *Erbhof*. Expropriations and repartitions of large farms were not to be undertaken except in rare exceptional cases of negligence or maladministration. For many large, landed estates, the same conservative principle was followed. They were protected according to fixed legal provisions. In fact, the traditional base of the *Junker* was precisely landed estates, with an almost feudal background. The Third Reich thus extended in a certain way the principle that had induced Frederick the Great[135] in 1748 to promulgate laws that forbade not only the growth of the state at the expense of the property of the nobility, but also its alienation and commercial sale, preventing it from passing into the hands of the class of wealthy bourgeois speculators. There is no need to say that, from our point of view, these initiatives of the Third Reich, which evinced a healthy anti-modern spirit and were in no way 'totalitarian,' are to be judged among the most positive. The disastrous condition to which democratic liberties in Italy have currently brought agriculture and the countryside proves our point. Even here, however, lack of tradition plays a role.

IV

After this we shall pass to a brief examination of aspects of the Third Reich that are relevant to race, its worldview and the Jewish problem.

We have already mentioned the racial background presented by the concept of *Volk*, which gave rise to a type of 'ethnic nationalism' or 'nationalism of birth.' Point 4 of the original programme of the National Socialist Party already distinguished the true citizen (*Reichsbürger*) from the 'member of the state' (*Staats-angehöriger*) on a biological and racial basis in the following terms: 'He alone is to be considered a citizen with full rights who is a comrade by birth (*Volksgenossen*) and is of German blood without regard to religious confession.' The concept of 'member of the state' is, on the other hand, purely juridical. It refers to all those who are bound by a simple, formal membership in the state only by not being foreigners. Hitler had considered scandalous the fact that, for so long, the ethnic-racial concept of citizenship was not taken into account, that acquisition of citizenship could 'take place no differently from admission to an automobile club;' that is, all it would take is 'a request so that, by the decision of a bureaucrat, something happens that not even Heaven can do: a stroke of a pen and a Zulu or a Mongol becomes a pure German.'[136] Birth in a German territory could define the simple quality of being a 'member of the state.' By itself, it should not give the right to hold public office or exercise political activity. According to the views expressed by Hitler in his *Mein Kampf*, becoming a 'citizen,' a real member of the Reich, would require a further validation, based, in addition to race, on physical health and then on an oath of allegiance, solemnly sworn and shown to the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the community of birth. Only then would the applicant receive a 'certificate of citizenship,' which would be 'like a bond that unites all classes and covers every abyss.' Hitler goes so far as to affirm that 'being a street cleaner in a Reich like this would signify a greater honour than being a king in a foreign state.'[137] With these words and others like them that attest a completely plebeian spirit, Hitler offered as much as was needed so that any German who was not born from the mixture with 'non-

Aryan' or Jewish blood could raise his head. In addition, in Point 6 of the original programme of the Nazi party he says, 'The right to decide on the direction of the state can be recognised only for citizens who are comrades by birth. Therefore we request that any public office in the Reich, in the provinces and the districts be occupied by a citizen of the Reich.'

Once he had seized power, he began implementing this programme. Early retirement was granted all those bureaucrats who did not merit the full qualification of 'comrade by birth.' (The requirement for this was not having Jewish blood, or blood from another non-Aryan race, in one's ancestry going back three generations.) The same provision was then adopted in regard to those functionaries who, although they were 'Aryan,' had nevertheless married or planned to marry a woman who belonged to a non-Aryan race. In the case of a *fait accompli*, that is of a functionary, official, professor, and so on who had married a non-Aryan women before the promulgation of these laws, the choice was left of divorce or losing his position. At first some exceptions were made for veterans or relatives of decorated veterans who had fallen in the First World War. Other exceptions could be considered by the Ministry of the Interior in agreement with an official who was a specialist in matters related to functionaries stationed abroad, for whom an essentially discretionary and pragmatic criterion was followed. Other exceptions could be dictated by reasons of state for those who had deserved well of the Reich. Hence the curious qualification of *Ehrenarier*, or 'honorary Aryan,' which however should strictly speaking have had as counterpart the title of *Ehrenjude*, that is, 'honorary Jew,' 'honorary Levantine,' and so on, to be applied to the many who, although biologically 'Aryan,' were not so in character, behaviour or spirit.

Other laws extended similar measures even beyond the narrowly political and governmental sphere to the cultural, professional and even religious sphere. In regard to religion, the 'Aryan clause' created conflicts with both Catholics and Protestants because, on the basis of the clause, pastors and holders of other religious offices in the two churches who had had ancestors of non-Aryan blood up to the third generation could not be authorised to exercise their functions in the Third Reich. This was naturally unacceptable from the Christian point of view, which is that of the essential equality of all creatures and of the super-racial character of the priesthood, which in Catholicism is established only by a sacrament. The only

Christians who accepted the new disposition were the so-called German Christians in the Protestant camp, who voted for certain laws and elected bishops who were dependent on a central bishop of the Reich who was obliged to swear loyalty to the head of state, that is, Hitler. Similarly, there were plans to form a 'German National Church'[138] (Rosenberg, Hauer,[139] Bergmann,[140] etc.).

The racial idea affected the political idea so strongly that Hitler wrote, 'The state represents not an end but a means. It is the premise for the formation of a superior human culture, without being, however, the principle that creates such a culture. This principle, or cause, is uniquely the presence of a race that is fit for culture. Even if there had been hundreds of model states on the Earth, should Aryan man, the bearer of culture, become extinct, there would no longer be a culture at the spiritual level of today's superior nations… We must distinguish with the greatest accuracy the state, which is the "vessel," from the race, which is the "content." This vessel has a purpose only if it is capable of holding and protecting the content. Otherwise it makes no sense.'[141] 'The defence of the race' is therefore proposed as the primary goal of the state. This is the source of the so-called 'Laws for the Defence of German Blood and Honour.'[142] On the one hand, prohibiting mixed marriages and even mixed unions, under the penalty of suffering the consequences, was intended to protect the racial substance of the body of citizens of the Reich from further mutating crossbreeding. Later, various eugenic measures were considered that were intended to prevent, even among 'Aryan' Germans, offspring who were genetically tainted.

The role that 'myth' played in all this is clear, as well as its confusing the concept of 'race' with the concept of the nation (which ends up basically democratising and degrading the former). Further, no thought was given to defining in positive, even spiritual, terms the concept of 'Aryan.' It implicitly allowed every German to think that he was preeminently the 'Aryan' to whom was attributed the creation and origin of every higher culture. This was the incentive for a baleful arrogance that was more than nationalist (and completely foreign to the traditional Right). It had, on the one hand, an undeniable efficacy in the emotional mobilisation of the German masses, but also deleterious consequences, *inter alia*, in the policy followed by Nazi Germany in occupied territories, as we shall discuss later.

In reality, when the more serious racialist authors had spoken of the 'Aryan,' they had had in view a rather extensive genus in which 'German' (and also 'Germanic') could figure only as a particular species. Houston Stewart Chamberlain himself,[143] who was highly respected by Alfred Rosenberg, the principal ideologue of Nazism, had used 'Aryan' to refer to a 'Celtic-German-Slavic complex.'

If, therefore, the concept of race had an unclear content in National Socialist propaganda and legislation and suffered a collectivising degradation, on the other hand a different and more selective direction was asserted in the Third Reich, although less officially. Here the reader can return to what we have said in considering the sense, purpose and acceptable aspects of the 'racist' turn of Italian Fascism. If generic racism was a simple expedient for reinforcing national self-consciousness — here, as we have said, the attitude was not very different from the one assumed by England in its empire concerning other races, for instance — since modern race doctrine does not consider only the large-scale anthropological divisions, but also 'races' as special articulations inside each race, including the White or 'Aryan' race, we should recognise that, in reference to this scholarship, Germany does not represent the expression of a single, pure and homogeneous racial stock, but in general is a mixture of several 'races' (in this second, more differentiated sense). This is the basis for the move to a second-level racism, so to speak. The collectivist idea that the Aryan-German *Volk* and *Volksgemeinschaft* should be delimited, defended and manipulated in a totalitarian fashion on the basis of *Gleichschaltung* came to be replaced by the idea that not all the racial components of the German people had the same value, and that the higher, more qualified element was that of the Nordic or 'Nordid' race. In addition, plans were developed that were intended to develop this component in the Third Reich, to guarantee it positions of supremacy. With an eye now not only on the biological element, but also on definite gifts of character and a definite vision of life, the term *Aufnordung* was coined, that is the 'Nordification,' of the German people. To elevate it, it would be necessary to try to give a prevalent 'Nordic' stamp to the German people. If this initiative was not asserted in the Third Reich in the official seats of power, it was, however, viewed from on high with sympathy and played a significant role in some organisations of which we shall soon speak, notably the SS.

Nevertheless, to the German man in the street there was no lack of motives for rather ironic reflections about the state of affairs, because, in relation to race, Hitler was not at all a pure 'Nordic' type, nor were his closest collaborators and the heads of the Party, like Goebbels, Himmler himself, Ley, Bormann, and so on. (At most one could mention Rosenberg, Heydrich and von Schirach).[144] On the other hand, Hindenburg and Bismarck were physically of Nordic stock, but 'Phalic,'[145] while the Nordic element in the Prussian was strongly mixed with the 'Ostid' (Slavic). If anywhere, the Nordic element could be rather clearly recognised especially in the officer corps, the aristocracy and some non-urban stocks in the provinces.

At any rate, from our point of view, for a global evaluation of German racism, the German-Aryan presumption under which, as Hitler proclaimed, being a street sweeper in the Reich should be considered a greater honour than being the king of a foreign country, should seem a demagogic aberration. Nonetheless, the fact remains that, even from the point of view of the Right, a certain balanced consciousness and dignity of 'race' can be considered as salutary, if we think where we have ended up in our days with the exaltation of the Negro and all the rest, the psychosis of anti-colonialism, and 'integrationist' fanaticism, all of which are phenomena occurring parallel to the decline of Europe and the West as a whole. In the second place, when dealing with Fascism, we have already recognised the legitimacy that could be offered by the ideal of a new, superior human type at the centre of a general process of crystallisation, rectification and formation of a nation's substance, on the condition that we do not excessively emphasise the biological aspect in this ideal, but only if we particularly stress the 'race of the spirit.' Instead, in National Socialist racism it was precisely this biological aspect that played a significant role and indulged in wishful thinking by means of a 'scientistic' mental deformation, when it was thought that all that had to be done was to discover prophylaxis and erect barriers against crossbreeding and miscegenation, along with more eugenic measures, so that lost virtues would reappear, the idea being that, almost automatically, man would arise again as the creator of a higher culture. Today we see populations like the Norwegian, Swedish and Dutch that present a high degree of racial and even 'Nordic' purity, but within they are more or less lifeless, spiritually

bastardised, and deprived of the virtues that characterised them in other epochs.

An essential point that cannot be overlooked in the present essay, but cannot be adequately developed either, is National Socialism's anti-Judaism and our judgment upon it. For Hitler, the Hebrew is the mortal enemy of the Aryan race, in particular of the German people. He is the bearer of a force that acts in a destructive sense, the subversive contaminator in the bosom of the cultures and societies within which he seeks, on the other hand, to assure himself power and influence. We should recognise that in Hitler anti-Semitism played the role of a true *idée fixe*, of which, in this almost paranoid aspect, it is not possible to completely explain its origins and which had tragic consequences. In his writings and speeches, Hitler over and over again attributes to the Jew the cause of every evil. He truly believed that the Jew was the only obstacle to the creation of an ideal German national society, and he made this obsession an essential ingredient in his propaganda. Apart from Marxism, for Hitler all Bolshevism has been the creation and tool of Judaism. The same holds true for Western 'capitalist plutocracy' and the Masons. These are all theses of which he should have recognised the one-sided character early on. We may wonder whether Hitler, in his 'fixation,' was not the victim of one of the tactics of what we have elsewhere called the 'occult war,' a tactic consistent with turning all our attention to concentrate on only one particular sector where the fighting forces are acting, while distracting our attention from other sectors where their activity can continue almost undisturbed. When I say this, we do not mean that there is no Jewish problem, on which we shall dwell in a moment. As Hitler professed it, however, displaying attitudes that had long been part of the so-called 'German Movement,'[146] anti-Semitism had the character of an obsessive fanaticism. It was the sign of a lack of inner control, and it is because of it that there is a stain that is difficult to remove from the Third Reich. The common error that racism and anti-Semitism are regarded by many people as synonyms also has its principal origin in Hitlerism.

Hitler's attitudes created a kind of diabolical vicious circle. Since his ideas about Jews and the struggle against them had already been proclaimed in the party's first programme, it was bound to polarise against Germany — increasingly, the more Nazism gained ground — all of international

Judaism, which *inter alia* controlled a good part of the large information agencies. In turn, this polarisation reinforced Hitler's ferocious anti-Semitism by furnishing him with a justification for his beliefs, and so on and so forth. In Germany, apart from the circles of the 'German Movement' we have mentioned, if there was no great sympathy for the Jews and they were often excluded from various organisations, the people in general did not harbour a violent aversion to them, as was the case in Poland and old Russia. (It is known that these countries distinguished themselves by massive and bloody persecutions with pogroms.) In the beginning of the Third Reich, anti-Semitism was restricted to boycotting Jewish businesses and the direction seemed to be heading toward a sort of apartheid. Since Jews were not considered members of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the German ethnic-national community, but only citizens of a non-Aryan race, almost like a foreign guest (for Hitler, Jews were not Germans of another religious confession, but a people apart), the goal was for Jews to live apart, have their own businesses, professions, schools, and so on, separated from Aryan society, and were to be prevented from carrying out an activity that was held to be parasitic, materialist, miserly and underhanded. The government left open the possibility that those Jews who did not like this policy should abandon the Reich, without taking with them all the property they had acquired, however. The truth was — a matter generally suppressed — that for a large number of other nations, they were also undesirable elements, and obtaining an entry visa was very difficult. For instance, there was the well-known tragedy of a steamship liner full of exiled German Jews that were stopped at the edge of American territorial waters and refused entry. [147] In the end, they sank the ship in despair. There was also another tragedy during the war of a large group of Hungarian Jews (or Jews who had taken refuge in Hungary) who could have escaped their tragic fate if, after encouraging negotiations with the leaders of the SS, the British government had not refused to receive them in Egypt.[148] In general, the ideal solution of the Jews' problem was seen as setting them free by assigning them a land. For instance, there was talk of Madagascar.[149] It is known today that the state of Israel, in accomplishing the goal of 'Zionism,' has not fulfilled this function. Those who still pose the Jewish problem today — in spite of the fact that the persecutions undergone by the Jews have made them 'taboo' — believe that the most dangerous Jews have no intention of confining

themselves to Palestinian territory, and abandon their own positions in Western countries where they have rooted themselves and have very different possibilities and free hands.

Serious persecutions in the Third Reich began with reprisals that were organised in response to the 1938 assassination of a German diplomat from the embassy in Paris, vom Rath, by a Jew who wanted to make a political statement.[150] Aside from the devastations and excesses that resulted, it furnished the excuse for the promulgation of harsh anti-Jewish laws that had the backlash effect of exacerbating the campaign abroad against the Third Reich beyond all limits. Added to this spiral was a further spin that in part involved Fascist Italy as Germany's ally because, as we have said, this campaign was one of the causes that drove Mussolini to take rather moderate anti-Semitic measures in retaliation.[151] The physical liquidation of Jews, however, has to be seen as taking place in the period of the war in the territories occupied by Germany, because estimates say that in Germany itself at the start of hostilities there remained only about 25,000 Jews.[152] For these massacres, about which the greater part of the German people learned only later, no justification or excuse can be accepted.

The Jewish question presents a social aspect and a cultural aspect. In the social aspect, it arose only in a relatively recent period, after the French Revolution and the emancipation of the Jews. Before, we could speak particularly of a religious anti-Semitism that had nothing to do with social and racial anti-Semitism. (For modern racists, a Jew who converts to Christianity remains Jewish and should be treated as a Jew.) Thus, for an orientation from the point of view of the Right, we cannot refer to the attitude of these earlier states in which loyalty, not ethnic origin, was most important. Prussia was rather liberal towards Jews. In England, Jews figured among conservatives, and the creation of the British Empire is due in part to a Jew, Disraeli.[153] In the Habsburg Empire too, Jews, while not enjoying sympathy, in reality had a great deal of freedom. The thesis of National Socialist anti-Semitism is that Jews took advantage of the free space accorded them to advance inordinately in the societies in which they lived. Anti-Semitism is defined as a reaction provoked by the fact that Jews, in tight solidarity, had succeeded in assuring themselves pre-eminence in different societies with positions in economic, professional and cultural life in numbers that stood in no relation to the numerical proportion of the

Jewish group in respect to the complex ‘Aryan’ populations of the relevant countries. In Germany, for instance, in cities like Berlin, Frankfurt and Breslau, the percentage of Jewish lawyers and doctors seems to have reached 50%. At the University of Berlin, among the teachers on the law faculty there were 15 Jews and 29 non-Jews; in the medical school, there were 118 Jews and 147 non-Jews. Even elsewhere, for instance, in Vienna and Bucharest, matters were not very different. Jews enjoyed large percentages of representation and great influence in the fields of journalism and publishing. Finally, the presence of many Jewish elements among the leadership of German Marxism and Communism were undeniable. In addition, Metternich[154] had already noticed how Jews who had occupied important positions were ‘first-rate revolutionaries’ as ‘writers, philosophers, poets, public speakers, publicists and bankers,’ adding that they had probably prepared a ‘baleful tomorrow’ for Germany.

From the point of view of democratic liberalism, there was nothing to object to in all this and every limit, such as the principle of a proportional *numerus clausus*,[155] appeared absurd and negative. The rise, or the opposite, of the Jewish problem was linked (and is still linked) to the point of view of ‘ethnic nationalism’ and the presupposition that the Jew was an extraneous element in a given national stock. More generally, however, here we could pose the problem of the position to take before so-called ‘integration’ in the case not so much of Jews as of decidedly heterogeneous elements, as for example, Negroes. Objectively, it is then possible to wonder if, supposing a population has no sympathy for a given race because of specific physical and character traits, should ‘integration,’ in homage to democratic ‘liberty,’ impose a complete lack of any discrimination? This is the question that should be asked today in the United States.

Apart from the simple anti-Semitic impulse against the factual Jewish intrusion into foreign societies, and the population’s corresponding and often instinctive reactions, and beyond the numeric proportions in key positions that are held to be unjust and invasive, as we have already discussed in *Fascism Viewed from the Right* (Chapter XI), it would be necessary, to be fair, to demonstrate that being a Jew gives a particular, undesirable stamp to the relevant activity. In some professional fields, such as for instance medicine and the natural sciences, this would be difficult to prove. In general, in all times Jewishness as a way of being, comportment

and as a particular form of character has been recognised, and calling someone a Jew has never counted as praise. At a higher level, anti-Semitism focuses on influences that are viewed as negative in the cultural, ethical and political-cultural field — to mention only two names, one goes from Karl Marx to Sigmund Freud — and it is on this level that the polemic has taken place. It would then be necessary first of all to define Jewishness in general and spiritual terms (as a brilliant Jew, Otto Weininger, has correctly done), [156] emphasising certain aspects of character that alone should be of first importance, and which could indicate from what, appropriately, we must defend ourselves and what should be avoided. Research like this could be attempted. We have already indicated these elements in my book, *The Blood Myth*.[157] If an anti-Semite of conservative orientation of Kaiser Wilhelm's day, like Adolf Stoecker,[158] had to affirm to the Reichstag that the Jewish problem was an 'ethical problem,' basically he was indicating a similar reference point in order to pose the question adequately. On the other hand, a writer who was frequently cited in German 'national' circles, Paul de Lagarde,[159] had distinguished the Jew who was faithful to his own tradition, whom Lagarde respected to a certain degree, from the secularised modern Jew. In reality, when ethical motives were adopted, people meant the second. To the modern secular Jew was attributed a materialist view of life and a corresponding praxis, greed for money, an inclination to unscrupulous speculation (a serious outstanding sociologist who was free from ideologies, like Werner Sombart,[160] had already indicated the relationship between the Jewish spirit and the development of modern capitalism), rationalism and 'modernism' in their corrosive, anti-traditional aspects, the dishonesty of a double moral standard when dealing with non-Jews, as well as everything that can derive, even without a conscious intent, from his condition of being a 'rootless' man (and so related to a cosmopolitism and internationalism, believed to be lethal to the *Volk* and its values) and finally thirst for power (as 'overcompensation' for the inferiority complex created in him by the vile conditions imposed for centuries on the 'chosen people.')

More generally, National Socialist racism in its cultural campaign constantly used the terms *arteigen* (or *artgemäss*) and *artfremd*, that is, agreeing with or alien to the true nature (of the *Volk*). Concerning this, National Socialism lacked a precise and convincing definition, which

anyhow was not easy to come up with. In fact, there is an entire assembly of aspects of modern culture and civilisation that is deleterious for every differentiated value and form. We need to remember that, if we can indicate the presence of Jews in various modern intellectual, ideological and artistic currents that incontestably entail subversion and denaturing, this activity would never have been possible, unless the terrain had been prepared for quite some time, not by Jews, but by ‘Aryans,’ and often in irreversible terms.

V

We should ascribe as a merit to National Socialism to have at least felt the need for a 'struggle for our worldview.' For Hitler himself, worldview was a factor of primary importance, superior to ideologies and party talking points. The revolution had to be extended to the field of worldview, *Weltanschauung*. In defining the worldview, however, there was no success in achieving anything solid and unitary. Naturally the myth of blood and the mystique of blood were essential parts of this *Weltanschauung*. In addition, however, there was no way to avoid confronting deeper problems. Granted the use of the term 'Aryan' and the importance attributed to the Nordic element, the issue arose of considering what could be defined, in a more general and serious way, as the Aryan or Nordic-Aryan view of life, with reference to the ethical, spiritual and religious plane. In reality, this was the only way to be able to give a concrete and positive content to the simplistic slogans of the racial campaign and have a fundamental basis for the formative action in which, apart from the obsessions of a purely biological and scientistic racism, we have recognised the more valid aspect of this orientation, when we were speaking of Fascism (*Fascism Viewed from the Right*, Chapter XI). Even if, as we have just said, all this had remained in large measure in the condition of a work-in-progress in the Third Reich, while there was no lack of confusion and deviations, National Socialism as a 'cultural revolution' had the courage to tackle problems in an area from which Fascist Italy held its distance. The reader will remember, for instance, what we have noted concerning the lack of clarification and an in-depth exploration of the content of that which is truly Roman as a worldview.

To take a specific example, we can especially point out National Socialism's stance concerning the religious problem. National Socialism was opposed to every kind of atheism. Atheism and the materialist conception of life were aspects of Marxism and Communism that were emphasised in the struggle against these subversive ideologies. This is why, at the beginning, many Christians and Catholics saw an ally in National

Socialism. The very words of the SS oath invoke God, and Himmler could say, 'Whoever does not believe in God is presumptuous, megalomaniacal and stupid. He is not the man for us' (for the SS, that is — *ist überheblich, grösswahnsinnig, und dumm; er ist nicht für uns geeignet*).[161] But Christianity's turn was bound to come. It was officially proclaimed, 'The Party defends the point of view of a positive Christianity.'[162] The official statement did not make clear, however, what was positive Christianity and negative Christianity. *Inter alia*, the problem was posed of the degree to which Christianity could call itself 'Aryan' or could avoid becoming the target of anti-Semitic polemic. Some people sought an escape route in 'aryanising' Christianity by excluding the Old Testament as a purely Hebraic matter and 'purifying' the New Testament as well from its 'Semitic dregs' and the theology of the 'Jew' Paul (while an Aryan and elevated character was frequently attributed to the Gospel of John). Naturally these were rationalisations and sophistries, which Christians could not accept, while the radical 'nationalist' ideologues (Rosenberg, Hauer, Reventlow,[163] the Ludendorff circle)[164] saw in it a compromise and affirmed the complete incompatibility of Christianity with an authentic Aryan, Nordic or German view of life or a 'Germanic faith.' Regarding this, there was also the first draft of a 'German Faith Movement,' the *Deutsche Glaubensbewegung*.

As for Hitler himself, no valid contributions to the problem of a worldview in a higher sense can be found in his writings and speeches. While his Wagnerian infatuation is significant — for him, as for Chamberlain, Richard Wagner counted as the 'prophet of Germanism' — so is his inability to recognise the degree to which, aside from the greatness of his Romantic art, Wagner must be held accountable for the distortion of many Germanic and Nordic traditions and sagas. If, in his writings and speeches, Hitler often mentions God and Providence, whose will he considered himself designated to fulfil, it is not easy to understand what the nature of this Providence could be, if, on the one hand, following Darwin rather more than Nietzsche, he recognised the right of the stronger as the supreme law of life, while, on the other hand, he excluded as superstition any sort of supernatural intervention or order and devoted himself to exalting modern science and the 'eternal laws of Nature.' This attitude was equally that of the movement's principal ideologue, Alfred Rosenberg, who went so far as to see in modern science 'a creation of the pure Aryan spirit,'

without noticing that if technological conquests were due to modern science, so was the most destructive and irreversible spiritual devastations of the modern age, the desacralising of the universe. It is an openly illuminist and rationalist incomprehension for essential aspects of religion, paradoxically going *pari passu*[165] with the mystique of the blood, which we glimpse in Hitler and which is quite explicit in Rosenberg, for whom rites and sacraments were superstitions and creations of a non-Aryan spirit.

One can understand, therefore, in what shallows the struggle for the worldview ran aground in taking directions like this. The principal limit in this regard was that of a 'naturalism' that denied every true transcendence. Let it be enough to think that it condemned, as of a spirit that is not Aryan but rather 'Levantine,' the distinction between body and soul, since racism postulates and presupposes their indissoluble and substantial unity. Then there were those who drew from this denial the logical consequence by denying true immortality and conceiving of an 'immortality of the stock.' We see here how the slogans of a certain racial propaganda does violence to what clearly results from any serious investigation of the traditions of 'Aryan' (Indo-European) cultures, because these cultures recognised transcendence and made it the reference point for ethical virtues to which these National Socialist ideologues gave a value that was purely human and basically naturalistic. (See, for instance, the gloomy prospective of the so-called 'tragic heroism.') In these confusions, the ideas of the less satisfying parts of Nietzsche played a role, as in regard to the anti-ascetic prejudice (wherever they were not dealing with an 'immanent' ascesis, that is, self-discipline — as though apart from this there exists only a 'masochistic' ascesis based on mortifying the flesh). It will suffice to cite the absurdity formulated by a scholar (who in other respects is of indisputable quality), H. F. K. Günther,[166] about Buddhism: when the Indo-Europeans (the Aryans) conquered India, environmental and climatic conditions caused their energies, which were originally turned toward the affirmation of life, to reverse their polarity and become employed in denying life, 'which is suffering,' by means of ascesis.

A positive requirement in some National Socialist circles and those close to the movement could have been the study of origins and the return to origins. In this case, it would have been a question of Germanic and Nordic origins. But the mentality and the prejudices we have been discussing again

prevented the achievement of anything really positive in the very field in which some apostles of Germanism had ventured early on. We shall mention some of these initiatives when we speak of the SS. In the context of the Party, however, matters went little beyond the exhumation of some ancient customs in an almost folkloristic way. Among the mass demonstrations, however, one that presented a certain spectacular and suggestive character was the ritual lighting of a fire and the movement of a swastika formed of squads of men carrying torches in the Berlin Stadium on the day of the summer solstice. The ancient Germanic signs, the 'runes,' were also exhumed as identifying marks of some organisations (the SS again). In the field of symbols, however, — a field with important connections to the traditional worldview — the aforementioned lack of comprehension for the dimension of transcendence constituted an insuperable handicap. Even with the runes, their ancient 'magical' aspect was ignored. What is more, in this field, namely, what concerns the proper comprehension and use of symbols of origins, we may wonder whether, starting with Hitler himself, there was a real understanding of the central symbol of National Socialism, the hooked cross or swastika. According to Hitler's own words, it stood as a symbol of 'Aryan man's mission of fighting for victory, for the triumph of the idea of creative (*sic*) work, which has always been anti-Semitic.'[167] This assumption is truly primitive and 'profane,' because it is hard to see in Aryan origins what the swastika could have to do with creative work' (!) and Judaism. In addition, this symbol does not figure only in areas of Aryan culture and, in second place, it was never explained why the hooked cross as a National Socialist sign was turned upside down, that is, marked by a movement of rotation in the opposite direction to the one that was prevalent in its use with a solar or 'polar' significance. We can reject the idea that in this choice they knew what some people have suggested, that is, that the reversed movement concerned the meaning of the sign as a symbol of power, while the movement in the normal direction would have been related to 'wisdom.'[168] When the hooked cross was chosen as the Party's symbol, Hitler and his associates had absolutely no clue of notions like these.

[NOTE: We ought to treat as an idle fantasy what one person suggested, in the margin of a 'demonic' interpretation of Hitlerism, that is, that the

reversed movement of the hooked cross was an involuntary but clear mark of his demonic character. It is equally idle speculation — we can affirm this because we know who said it and why — what someone after the war claimed about an 'occult,' initiatory or counter-initiatory background to National Socialism.[169] In 1918, a small group had already been created, the Thule Bund,[170] which chose for its symbols the swastika and the radiant solar disk, but, aside from Germanism, its spiritual level was more or less that of Anglo-Saxon theosophy. There were also other groups and authors, for example, Guido von List[171] and Lanz von Liebenfels[172] (they also created an 'Order') who anticipated Hitler's ideas and employed the swastika, but they did all this without roots or connections with a true tradition and with a mixture of personal idiosyncrasies of every sort.]

If Hitler's *Mein Kampf* counted as the political and ideological Bible of National Socialism, Alfred Rosenberg's *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*[173] was considered the principal work concerning the worldview of and the interpretation of history in the Third Reich. It was referred to in more than one respect for the indoctrination of new recruits. The book was essentially a compilation, to which, however, could not be denied certain qualities of synthesis and some valid interpretations. *Inter alia*, he used the research of H. Wirth[174] on Nordic-Atlantic prehistory and of J. J. Bachofen[175] on the morphology of ancient civilisations. But apart from the misunderstandings we have already mentioned and an anti-Catholicism that was worthy of the Illuminati,[176] quite a few botched aspects of the book offered arms to the enemy, and the situation only got worse as Rosenberg moved from the horizons of high Antiquity to modern times, because it became increasingly clear that he was exploiting the facts in a German and political direction. At any rate, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* counted as the principal work that, even if not in openly official terms, was recommended in Hitler's Third Reich in the struggle for a worldview.

[NOTE: C. Steding, *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur*[177] is a less pretentious book but with different and more valid views and a superior conception of the state, drawn in part from Hegel, the 'philosopher of Prussianism.' Official Nazi circles took no notice of it and, on the contrary, wilfully ignored it.]

The different critical reservations we have had to make do not prevent us from recognising that something was happening in the Third Reich and new horizons were being courageously sought out in this area. The problem was that the various currents lacked adequate reference points, or were hindered by prejudices and distortions already before they got started. No one can say whether a different situation would have arisen if the Third Reich had enjoyed a longer and calmer life, through the work of elements that were better qualified and not tied to the current slogans, especially those that were primitively Germanic and racist. As to the accusation of 'paganism,' made against some tendencies in this area, from our point of view it should be said that, in principle, a certain renewed challenging of some aspects of the Christian and Catholic conception of the sacred and its vision of life and its morality was not deplorable. Under certain conditions, it would even have been legitimate and fruitful. So as not to sink to a lower level, however, contesting the exclusive validity of Christianity would have required for its counterpart the recognition of the sacred and transcendent contents present in what is a non-Christian and pre-Christian legacy. Otherwise there was the danger that the non-Christian vision of life they were seeking to rediscover and recover would be 'pagan' in exactly that worse sense that Christian apologetics had narrowly attributed to everything that was not Christian in order to exalt the new faith. What in both circles was accepted as 'German religion' or 'German faith' had an obviously naturalistic and pantheistic basis that placed it at a rather low spiritual level.

VI

Let us proceed to consider some initiatives of the Third Reich that, from our point of view, are not lacking in interest and in which we can see influences and impulses linked in part to ideas of the 'Conservative Revolution.' We are dealing with everything (beyond the collectivising talking points of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the national and racial community, and the *Führerstaat*, or Führer state, with its totalitarian, populist and dictatorial basis) that was related to the concept or ideal of an *Ordensstaat*, that is, a state based on an Order (in tacit partial opposition to the formula of the party state, a state based on political parties).

In this, the tradition of Prussian origins was, in a certain way, recovered. It is in fact known that the first small cell of Prussianism was an Order, the Order of Teutonic Knights, which was invited to defend the frontier of the East in 1226 by the Polish duke, Conrad of Masovia. The territories conquered by them and given to them in fiefdom constituted a state based on that Order. Protected by the Holy See, to which it owed feudal loyalty, and the Holy Roman Empire, it included Prussia, Brandenburg and Pomerania, and from 1415 was ruled by the house of Hohenzollern. In 1524, with the Reformation, the state of the Order was 'secularised,' that is, emancipated from Rome. If the Order's confessional link disappeared then, it preserved its ethical basis, which was that of ascetics and warriors. On those terms, the tradition continued and gave form to the Prussian state in its most characteristic aspects. When Prussia was established as a kingdom in 1701, the Order of the Black Eagle was created, which was connected to the hereditary nobility and had for its motto the same as the original Order, the classic principle of justice: *suum cuique*, to each his own. It is not without interest in understanding the particular value placed on the 'Prussian' formation of character, especially for what concerned the corps of officials, that there was an explicit reference to a virile assumption of Stoicism[178] for self-control, discipline, firmness of mind and a sober and upright lifestyle. So, for instance, in the *Corpus Iuris Militaris*[179] introduced into the academies of the eighteenth century, the official was

urged to study the works of Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Cicero and Epictetus. Marcus Aurelius,[180] especially, was the preferred reading of Frederick the Great. Related to this was the fact that a certain antipathy was nourished for intellectualism and the world of letters. Here we may recall the sarcastic and radical attitude of Frederick William I, the 'soldier king,'[181] who wanted to make Berlin a 'Nordic Sparta.' Loyalty ('liberty in obedience') and the principle of service and honour characterised the political upper class that ruled the Prussian state, which was already a 'state of Order,' and gave it form and force.

[NOTE: By association of ideas, we can mention a certain aversion for the type of 'intellectual,' observable somewhat in Fascism, but to a rather higher degree in National Socialism. In fact, Italian Fascism respected intellectuals and men with a distinguished reputation in culture and encouraged them to make a formal act of adhesion to the regime without caring too much about what they really thought, while in National Socialism there was little regard for them and, if they wanted to, it let them emigrate without caring about how famous they were. (Goebbels was even supposed to have said the words, 'When I hear someone talking about intellectuals, I want to put my hand on my pistol.')[182] Still we should remember the part played in Germany by a heavy, erudite, agnostic *Kultur* and also a line of intellectuals of bourgeois extraction and of humanist-liberal formation. Averse to every mystique of the state and authority, they held the antithesis between culture and spirit for dogma, on the one hand, and power, politics and military or warrior virtue, on the other. However, in general, from the point of view of an aristocratic Right, it is legitimate to feel a certain distance in respect to these 'intellectuals' and 'men of culture' who, after the advent of the bourgeoisie and the crisis of the ancient regimes, presumed to be the true representatives of spiritual values.]

Perhaps it is appropriate to indicate the influence that, in a more recent period and during the Weimar Republic, was exercised in some circles by the so-called *Bundesgedanke*, the conception or ideal of the *Bund*, since it led to outlines of organisational forms. *Bund* means, in general, league or association, but in this specific case the expression had a content close to that of an Order, and was not unrelated to what in some ethnological and

sociological scholarship has been called the *Männerbund*, that is, 'men's society.' The idea is that of an elite defined by an exclusively virile solidarity and a type of special chrism. In Germany, even before the development of National Socialism, different types of *Bund* arose, although of modest proportions, with various flourishes and an almost always exclusivist character. In cases in which the field of their interests interacted with the political field, they fought for an elite regime against mass regimes.

When these precursors are remembered, the idea that could have served as a corrective to Hitlerism was that the state should be based, not so much on a single party, as on something similar to an 'Order.' A fundamental task in the Third Reich was the creation of cadres trained by means of a systematic formation of an elite, conceived as the main 'bearer' of the idea of a new state and its corresponding worldview. The difference from the earlier, ancient tradition was that in Germany, in addition to qualities of character, physical requirements were taken into consideration, among them the 'race' factor, with special emphasis on the 'Nordic' type. There were two principal initiatives taken by the Third Reich in this direction.

The first initiative was the constitution, backed by the party, of three *Ordensburgen*, that is, three 'Order castles.' It was a question of complexes with edifices of an architecture that was inspired by the ancient Nordic-Germanic style, with large grounds annexed, including woods, fields and lakes, where, after an initial selection, young people were welcomed for a military, physical, moral and intellectual education including 'worldview.' Special attention was paid to courage and resolve with rather dangerous tests. Among other things, judicial proceedings were sometimes held in these castles with aspirants, or *Junker*, who followed the progress of the trial as an audience. Cases were chosen where honour and other ethical values played a role, to test the moral sensibility and natural faculties of judgment of the aspirants in the discussions that followed. Rosenberg supervised all the *Ordensburgen* and so his ideas served as the principal basis for the indoctrination, which, given the reservations we expressed concerning them, introduced a problematic factor into the system. While the young men were in these institutions, they led a life of a 'society of single men,' almost isolated from the rest. When they left, they would be in possession of a special preferential qualification to hold political offices and

obtain positions of responsibility in the Third Reich or, it is better to say, in what the Third Reich was supposed to become.

Of far greater importance was the initiative represented by the SS. In the aftermath of well-known post-war propaganda, as soon as there is talk of the SS most people today think only of the Gestapo, concentration camps and the role certain SS formations played in acts of repression and reprisal during the war, all of which is a rather crude and tendentious simplification. Since we are not dealing with contingencies, we shall not enter here into this subject. In this, as in every other case, we are interested only in the principles and the directive ideas to be considered independently from the historical results that some of their applications produced. So it is appropriate to cast light on some aspects of the SS that are generally (and purposely) ignored.

Originally, the SS initials stood for Saal-Schutz (Hall Protection), the name of a sort of bodyguard that Hitler used early on for his personal protection and to preserve order in the local committees. Then it was only a small group. Later, the two S's were instead intended to reference *Schutz-Staffel* (literally, protection echelon) and stylised in two zigzag lines which reproduced an ancient Nordic-Germanic sign, the 'runes of victory' and also the 'force-thunderbolt.' It developed into the formation of a real corps for the protection of the state — the so-called 'Black Corps,' distinct from the Brownshirts, the SA. Hitler and Göring used this corps in the repression of 30 June 1934 that, as we said, signified the elimination of the foolish desire of a radical 'second revolution' in the heart of the Party. Because of the role they played in this action, the SS were given a special status and special powers. They were considered the 'revolutionary guard of the National Socialist revolution.'

The true organiser of the SS was Heinrich Himmler, who was nominated *Reichsführer SS* or *Führer* of the Reich for the SS. Himmler was of Bavarian origin and had a Catholic education. When he was studying agriculture in 1919, he joined a corps of volunteers that fought the Communists. His political tendencies were philo-monarchist and Right-wing conservative, inherited from his father who had been the loyalist instructor of Heinrich, hereditary prince of Bavaria.[183] He was especially fascinated by the ideal of the Order of Teutonic Knights, which we spoke of earlier. He wanted to make the SS a corps that would perform the same

function of the state's central nucleus that the nobility had played with its unquestioning loyalty to the regime, but in a new form. For the formation of a man of the SS, he considered a blend of Spartan spirit and Prussian discipline. But he also had in view the order of Jesuits (Hitler jokingly used to call Himmler 'my Ignatius of Loyola'),[184] entailing a certain depersonalisation carried at times almost to inhuman extremes. Thus, for instance, whoever wanted to join the SS was told from the first day that, in his fidelity and absolute obedience, he had to be ready, if necessary, not even to spare his own brothers, that there were no excuses for a member of the SS, and that a promise is something absolute — to cite an example taken from a speech by Himmler, a member of the SS could be asked to stop smoking. If he did not promise to do it, he was rejected, but, if he promised and then as a member of the SS was caught smoking, 'all that remains is the pistol,' that is, suicide. Tests of physical daring were considered in the militarised units, for example, seeing if a soldier could remain calm while standing at attention and waiting for an explosive charge attached to his steel helmet to go off.[185]

A special aspect, however, was the racial clause. In addition to 'Aryan' blood (proof of Aryan ancestors from 1750 and onwards) and a healthy physical constitution, great importance was attached to a particularly tall type of the Nordid race. In addition, Himmler wanted his SS to be a *Sippenorden*, that is, an Order that, unlike the old knights, would have to correspond in the future to a stock, a blood, and a hereditary line (*Sippe*). Moreover, there was a notable limitation to the freedom allowed in the conjugal choices of men who served in the SS. He could not marry just any girl (not to mention girls of other races). The approval of an appointed racial official was necessary. If the decision was not accepted, there was no alternative: he had to leave the corps. Already upon his admission to the SS (after a period of testing), this clause was presented to the aspiring SS member. This racist biological reductionism was reaffirmed, together with a certain trivialising of the feminine ideal, which gave a special emphasis to the maternal aspect of woman.

While Hitler nursed an aversion for the descendants of the old German royal houses, Himmler had a weakness for them, and believed that the SS was the body of the Third Reich to which princes could suitably belong. In fact, various members of the nobility joined the SS. Prince Waldeck-

Pyrmont enrolled as early as 1929.[186] Among the old nobility, among others, princes Mecklenburg, Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Lippe-Biesterfeld, and others enrolled in 1933. Prince Philip of Assia was already Himmler's personal friend. The eventual rapprochement of this important organisation in the Third Reich with the German nobility was also expressed by the cordial relations the SS maintained with the Berlin Herrenklub ('Gentlemen's Club') and in the fact that Himmler delivered an address to the Deutsche Adelsgenossenschaft (Corporation of German Nobility).[187] The relations with the army, the Reichswehr, were more reserved, not so much for differences of orientation as for reasons of prestige, since militarised armed units were created in the SS and, finally, regular divisions that were to take the name of the Waffen-SS. Paul Hausser,[188] who had resigned from the army as a Lieutenant General to fight among the ranks of the 'Conservative Revolution' and Seldte's *Stahlhelm*, reorganized the SS academy in 1935 and was later superintendent of the school for SS cadets at Welfenschloss in Braunschweig.

As it developed, the SS had multiple articulations. In some of these, given their specific character, the aspects relevant to an 'Order' moved into the background, of course. Here we can ignore the SS of the 'death's head,' which had functions limited to those of the ordinary police and the state police. (Anyhow, by a decree of 17 June 1936, Himmler was named head of the police in the Ministry of the Interior.) This is the sector that was eventually responsible for certain negative aspects of the corps, which was used later to cover the entire SS in infamy. We shall only mention the so-called Verfügungstruppe SS, an armed force 'at disposition' that worked directly for the head of the Reich. Later, in July 1940, they developed into the Waffen-SS, which we have already mentioned, that is, an elite military unit, whose achievements (given the personal education demanded of an SS man) during the Second World War ought to have evoked the recognition and admiration of the enemy. We can also leave aside here the RuSHA section (the initials of the Rasse und Siedlungshauptamt),[189] which dealt with problems of race and internal colonisation. We are interested here in initiatives of a cultural order involving the SS.

Accomplishing Himmler's ideal encountered a sort of handicap in the fact that an order in the true sense presupposes a chrism, a spiritual basis,

but in this case reference could not be made to Catholicism. In fact, the anti-Christian orientation that we have mentioned, namely the unacceptability of Christianity because of everything in it that was not Aryan and 'Germanic,' was rather prominent within the SS. Although there was a certain tension between Himmler and Rosenberg, on this issue their views undeniably converged. When Christianity and Catholicism were excluded, there arose again the problem of worldview in terms of what went beyond strict discipline and character training, and the SS aspired to be a *weltanschauliche Stosstruppe*, that is, a shock force in the field of *Weltanschauung*. Fairly early on, the SS had set up the SD, or 'Security Service' (Sicherheitsdienst), which originally was supposed to carry out activities involving culture and cultural control (according to Himmler's declaration of 1937).[190] If the SD developed in different directions, including counterespionage, its Seventh Office maintained its cultural character, and serious scholars and professors worked with the SD. In addition, sometimes it was possible to become an *ex officio*[191] member of the SS *ad honorem*[192] (*Ehrendienst*, or honorific service) in the case of those cultural personalities who were judged to have given a valid contribution in the right direction. We can cite, for instance, Professor Franz Altheim[193] of Halle University, a respected historian of Antiquity and the Roman world, and Professor O. Menghin[194] of the University of Vienna, an eminent student of prehistory. The Ahnenerbe was a special SS institute that had the task of carrying out research on the legacy of origins, the field of symbols and traditions, and even archaeology.

In fact, attention was directed toward what could be gathered from this legacy for the issue of worldview, and in this field the nationalist exclusivism of certain circles was put aside. Thus, for instance, Himmler gave financial support to the Dutchman Herman Wirth, the author of *Der Aufgang der Menschheit*,[195] a large work on Nordic-Atlantic origins. He also invited an Italian scholar who had carried out research in this field to give speeches in Germany on the world of tradition in general, while keeping his distance from Catholicism and Christianity, but likewise avoiding the distortions for which we have blamed Rosenberg and others.

[NOTE: It is deplorable that in the area of popular journalism, the SD allowed the publication of what was entitled *Das Schwarze Korps* ('The

Black Corps'), a weekly full of coarse attacks against the Catholic clergy and a no less coarse and fanatic anti-Semitism.]

All this gives a picture of the SS rather different from and more complex than the one that is currently popular. If these particular initiatives remained at an early stage of development, having conceived of them at all still has a certain significance. In principle, particularly the ideal of an 'order state,' in its opposition to the mass totalitarian and dictatorial state and the state of political parties, must be given a positive evaluation from the point of view of the Right. We have already expressed our views on this point in criticising the Fascist one-party concept (*Fascism Viewed from the Right*, Chapter VI). In the specific case of Germany, everything would have depended on the degree to which it would have been possible to achieve an integration of the existing elements of the Right, while rectifying those aspects in respect of which some exponents of the 'Conservative Revolution' and Prussianism have blamed the Third Reich for usurping and counterfeiting their various ideas.

The SS acquired an increasingly greater political importance, so much so that there were people who could speak of it as 'a state within the state,' or even of an 'SS state.' In fact, the SS had its own cadres in many key positions of the Reich — administration, the diplomatic corps, and so on. The concept of an Order implied, in fact, that men of the Order had been designated for these positions, as was earlier the case for the nobility.

Finally, we should mention the Waffen-SS. As we have said, after July 1940 SS forces, which originally and in peacetime had had the character of a 'force at disposition,' developed into military units with armoured divisions that, although they maintained a certain level of autonomy, fought alongside the Wehrmacht. From this Waffen-SS originated what could be called 'the first European army' toward the end of the Second World War. Himmler approved the idea, which was first formulated by Paul Hausser and then taken up by Gottlob Berger,[196] of recruiting divisions of the Waffen-SS with volunteers from all nations under the banner of the struggle against Communist Russia and in defence of Europe and its civilisation. This was the restoration of the function that the Order of Teutonic Knights had in the beginning as guardian of the East and, at the same time, of the spirit that had animated the *Freikorps*, the voluntary groups that, on their

own initiative, had fought against the Bolsheviks in the eastern regions and the Baltic countries after the end of the First World War. In the end, more than seventeen nations were represented in the Waffen-SS, often with their own complete divisions: French, Belgians, Dutch, Scandinavians, Ukrainians, Spaniards, even Swiss, with a total of about 800,000 men, of whom only a part came from the Germanic area. The volunteers did not care that they would end up being considered as traitors and 'collaborators' for what they were doing, and after the war the survivors were often persecuted and put on trial in their respective countries.

[NOTE: The victorious Americans committed an unspeakable infamy when they handed over to the Soviet Union divisions of Ukrainian volunteers who had surrendered to them only when all was lost, knowing perfectly well that they were sending the Ukrainians to the slaughterhouse.

We should note that in the training of the new units of the Waffen-SS, it was the military aspect that was almost exclusively stressed, and what was relevant to the ideals of an Order was often shelved. The commander of an armoured division of the Waffen-SS, General Steiner,[197] felt the need to claim after the war (in his book *Die Armee der Geächteten*)[198] that the Waffen-SS units stood on the same level as those of the Reichwehr and should have been treated only as such, and that they had had nothing to do with 'Himmler's romantic obsessions' (the General was speaking of Himmler's idea of the SS as an Order), concerning which General Steiner expressed himself in a rather antipathetic and presumptuous fashion.]

In a speech delivered at Poznan on 4 October 1943 Himmler spoke about the SS as of an armed Order that in the future, after the elimination of the Soviet Union, would have to stand guard for Europe against the 'Asiatic hordes' on the Urals. What is important here is that a certain change of perspectives had taken place at this juncture. The Aryan was no longer identified with the German. The plan was to fight, not for an expansionist National Socialism based on a unilateral racism and for 'Pan-Germanism,' but for a higher idea, for Europe and a European 'New Order.' This orientation was gaining ground in SS circles and found expression in the Charlottenburg declaration published by the SS Central Office toward the end of the war in response to the San Francisco declaration[199] made by the

Allies concerning the goals of the war, the ‘crusade for democracy.’ The Charlottenburg declaration dealt with the Third Reich’s conception of man and life, and especially the concept of the New Order, which was not to have a hegemonic character but a federalist and organic one.

We should remember, on the other hand, that to Himmler was due an attempt of salvage *in extremis*[200]. (which Hitler considered an act of treason). Through Count Bernadotte,[201] he transmitted a proposal for a separate peace to the western Allies so as to continue the war against the Soviet Union and Communism alone. This proposal, if it had been accepted, could have assured Europe a different destiny by avoiding the ‘Cold War’ that followed and the Communist takeover of Europe beyond the ‘Iron Curtain,’ but it was completely rejected on the basis of a blind ideological radicalism, just as the same radicalism led to the rejection of the peace offer made by Hitler on his own initiative to England[202] on reasonable terms in a famous speech in the summer of 1940, when the Germans were winning.

VII

Leaving aside the SS and its last hour 'Europeanist' development, in this context we need to evaluate the ideology that was the foundation of the foreign policy of the Third Reich, and in particular of Hitler. We shall deal here with some of the essential causes of the Second World War and the prospects traced out in the case of a victorious ending for what concerned a European 'New Order.'

The most negative aspect of Hitlerism is represented by the fundamental and fatal part that the radicalism of an irredentist ethnic nationalism played in it. It was a true *idée fixe* for Hitler, and drove him into adventures that were at first successful but in the end led to catastrophe because of his lack of a sense of limits and realistic possibilities. All Germans had to be reunited at any price into a single Reich, the Third Reich, and under a single *Führer*. Hitler believed that this was literally a mission entrusted to him by Providence. The ideology of the *Volk*, which we discussed earlier while indicating its antecedents, here fused with the ideology of modern anti-traditional nationalism. It is anti-traditional especially in regard to Germany, because in neither the First nor the Second Reich do we encounter anything resembling such an infatuation. This was not the basis on which Prussia or Frederick the Great conducted their wars. We have already recalled that, together with the conservative party, Bismarck stood very far from any irredentist ethnic nationalism. He never posed the problem of the populations of German origin that were found outside the borders of the Reich, nor did he indulge in Pan-Germanic obsessions. (Next to him, von Moltke[203] had broad views of a decidedly 'European' orientation.) Hitler, on the other hand, systematically spread and fanned the fires of agitation among the so-called *Volksdeutsche*, the German minorities living outside the Reich (aside from the population of Austria), finally creating situations and problems that could only be resolved with violence. Otherwise, *inter alia*, Danzig would not have represented the crucial point from which stemmed the avalanche of the Second World War.[204]

As we have said, however, afterwards he did not stop with ethnic-nationalist integration, but advanced in a direction close to a hegemonic Pan-Germanism, which prejudiced in advance the idea of a 'New Order.' In fact, when the Reich extended its power over non-German areas, it asserted the supremacist idea and established a system of protectorates and satrapies with discriminatory practices that were bound to provoke reactions and nourish resistance, when it should have created the premises for the constitution of a superior unity that left a large margin for the independence of its parts. It is well known that, here and there, the arrogance of the *Herrenvolk*[205] showed its face. The expression ran the risk of passing from the aristocratic sense of a 'people of lords' to the hateful one of a 'people of masters,' to the advantage of an 'Aryanity' that turned the German element alone into a monopoly, and ended up ignoring it in the case of other stocks that considered themselves no less 'Aryan,' but which were often considered and treated as subhuman. This was already the case with the Poles, whose nation had a glorious, albeit unlucky, past. (Among other things, it was forgotten that it was a Polish duke who had summoned the Order of Teutonic Knights into those lands where Prussia was later fated to take form.) On account of his double infatuation, Hitler could not recognise an alternatively fruitful political line for Eastern Europe. Far more important than Danzig would have been playing on the atavistic anti-Russian sentiments of the Polish people in order to win them over as allies in his projected 'push to the East,' the *Drang nach Osten*.

In addition, there were the culpable mistakes committed by Nazi Germany in the Russian campaign and in the occupied Soviet territories, which were related to the conception of the 'living space' to be ensured to the German people to a degree that led to a kind of inter-European colonialism. (In our opinion, the task of a far-sighted policy of the Third Reich ought to have been that of seeking every possible means to obtain at least the neutrality of the western nations so as to have free hands for a devastating attack exclusively against the Soviet Union — but that would have required the shrewdness and genius of a Metternich.) If the slogan was the war against Communism and the liberation of Russia from Communism, there was, however, also the idea of expansion into occupied territories with the intention of simply conquering the native populations, in

dealing with whom the German arrogance of seeing itself as the superior people often asserted itself.

[NOTE: If we can believe the book published after the war by Picker with the title *Hitler's Table Talk*[206] — it consists of notes of opinions that the *Führer* is supposed to have expressed at dinner in conversation with his collaborators at General Headquarters during the period of German military success, and which were supposed to have also served as directives — Hitler is supposed to have thought about initiatives intended to systematically foment or maintain the state of cultural and even physical inferiority of populations, such as the Russians, in respect to groups of Germans that were to have colonised and exploited their lands.]

So it happened that, while at the very beginning the victorious Germans were welcomed with joy as liberators in different Russian areas, later the attitude of the populations was bound to change when, instead of the hoped-for liberty, the commissars of the National Socialist Party, military commanders, and unscrupulous exponents of the Reich's industry and trade took the place of the Soviet authorities and gave the impression that one oppression had been replaced by another. Free governments set up at the beginning by Russians in territories conquered by the Wehrmacht were dissolved, and even patriotic anti-Communists were persecuted. General Andrei Vlasov, creator of the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia,[207] was persecuted and even arrested before he was allowed to organise an anti-Soviet Ukrainian army to fight alongside the German Wehrmacht. All this was absolutely counterproductive and led to indifference and distrust in the populations, and nourished partisan movements. It also provided a useful ideological foundation for Stalin's politics, which, partly discarding its original Communist ideology, created a new Russian nationalism and coined the watchword of 'Soviet patriotism,' thus mobilising very important moral forces that were perhaps decisive in the war against the Germans.

All this shows the problematic element that could have prejudiced the project of a 'New Order.' If, at the end of my essay on Fascism, we have indicated the undeniable advantages that, from a world perspective, the victory of the powers of the Axis and Japan would have had, one must,

however, reject and resolutely condemn a system in which the tendencies we have just discussed were maintained. The ideal of a European New Order could have referred only to an organic, solidary and synergetic coordination of states and communities whose characteristic traits and independence were respected. This was also the thinking of those who formed the divisions that fought in Russia, as volunteers from many nations, as a real 'European army.' They were fighting not only against Russia, but also for this kind of Europe, not for an expansionist Pan-Germanism. What would have prejudiced every positive future development would have been precisely everything that corresponded to the properly Hitlerian component in the Third Reich, to be distinguished from the other components we have discussed. A process of rectification at the appropriate moment could have developed from representatives of these components, who had held important positions in the Third Reich.

To close, let us discuss the true internal and extra-legal opposition in the Third Reich. As we have already mentioned, it is frivolous to think that a regime utilising only terror and oppression could produce the unity that Germany demonstrated, the ensemble of achievements of which it was capable, and what made it a truly great world power after the collapse that followed the First World War and the Weimar Republic. His successes in the area of national reconstruction and foreign policy were Hitler's trump card, because the state of affairs had created a situation where it was impossible to be against National Socialism without being anti-German. For Germany, as for Italy, only by resorting to conscious falsification could anyone maintain that the crowds of that period did not almost unconditionally, and often fanatically, support their leaders, although we have indicated that the recourse to populism and 'mythology,' instead of having the prestige of a higher tradition, made that adhesion one that would dissolve, almost without leaving a trace, when the tension broke. This is exactly what happened in the two nations after 1945.

In the Third Reich, it is almost impossible to point out an internal opposition that deserves recognition from our point of view, not for what it denied, but for its positive counterpoint, the doctrine of the state. There are two exceptions. They are those elements of the Right that, beginning with the Reichswehr, although they cooperated with the government, maintained a reserve and a distance and did not identify with National Socialism as an

ideology, as well as the intellectuals identified with the 'Conservative Revolution' who withdrew from the scene. In this regard, there is no question of conspiracies before the one of 20 July 1944,[208] which was intended to eliminate Hitler physically, because the primary intent was practical. They were trying to spare Germany a worse fate, given that the military situation had become desperate. They acted in the supposition that without Hitler, and with a new non-Nazi regime, it would be possible to negotiate with the Allies on a better basis. Of course, they were fooling themselves. (For an analogous illusion, the treatment of Italy and the peace conditions imposed on it after Mussolini and his regime were removed show this.)[209] In addition, we should reject the thesis maintained by some scholars, for instance, the philo-Prussian historian, Hans-Joachim Schoeps, [210] that with the conspiracy and the assassination attempt of 20 July, there would have been a re-awakening of Prussianism, as though its exponents were to be found in at least equal numbers on the other side.

In the intellectual circles of the 'resistance,' like the so-called Kreisau Circle,[211] if there figured a von Moltke,[212] the Field Marshal's grandson, soaked in a drab spiritualism — he was even a follower of Christian Science — there were also Marxists and working class trade unionists, and others of a flaky 'Christian socialism.' At the time of the attempted assassination, if it had succeeded, there was no longer any idea of having Carl Goerdeler as Chancellor of the new government, a man with Rightist and even philo-monarchist tendencies, but Julius Leber, a former Socialist deputy. Leber, together with Adolf Reichwein,[213] had been charged with making contact with a clandestine Communist group in Berlin, an idea viewed favourably by the would-be assassin, Colonel von Stauffenberg.[214] We are dealing, therefore, with an ideologically inconsistent, promiscuous and bogus 'resistance.' It had no unity or higher legitimacy. It was not by starting from this group that a Third Reich in the most authentic sense could have been established, as was foreseen before Hitler's rise by the circles we have previously discussed, by overcoming the specific negative aspects of the National Socialist system and its institutions.

With these reflections we can conclude these rather summary notes on yesterday's Germany. On account of the character of the material, we have had to give more room to the historical and documentary part than in our examination of Fascism. So, aside from the judgments we have

occasionally pronounced on particular issues in the course of our exposition, the reader will have to proceed to a discrimination, and our intention — that may perhaps differentiate the present investigation, as succinct as it may be, from most studies on National Socialism — has been to highlight the multiplicity and even the heterogeneity of its components. If, from one point of view, Hitlerism was destructive to different aspects of earlier German traditions, on the other hand, in spite of everything, it restored and preserved, while trying to exploit or adapt them, other elements that should not be disowned today, just because they figured in the Third Reich and were often distorted by it.

This is not what post-war Germany did, not to speak of anti-fascist circles and foreign Leftists. Completely dominated by a democratic brainwashing first organised by the occupying powers, then obtusely continued and even perfected on their own account, the new Germany (the federal one — of the other, controlled by the Communists, there is no reason to speak) has neglected the principle, contained in a German expression, of not 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater.' It seems to have been unable to conceive a 'third way,' of the Right, far from both the totalitarianism of the National Socialist *Führer-Staat* and democracy and Marxism: a third way in which, when adequately rectified and restored to their origins, some of the ideas that acted in the preceding period could have been considered. If this had been the case, and if a global condemnation of the earlier experiences had not been proclaimed, a condemnation often more acrimonious than the one of which Fascism has been the object in Italy, namely a surrendering to a general revision of its entire earlier history (the formula is *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*),[215] which is equivalent to an actual denial of history, present-day Germany, aside from its miraculously rapid recovery and its new material and economic prosperity, would not present, as it does today, an incredible ideological vacuum in its worldview, especially in what concerns the new generations. It would constitute a much more valid element in the creation of a European alternative to capitalism and Communism.

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[1] *Il fascismo: saggio di una analisi critica dal punto di vista della destra* (Rome: G. Volpe, 1964).

[2] *Il fascismo visto dalla destra; Note sul terzo Reich* (Rome: G. Volpe, 1974).

[3] Julius Evola, *Imperialismo Pagano* (Rome: Atanòr, 1928); cited from *Imperialismo Pagano* nelle edizioni italiana e tedesca (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 2004). English translation: (Kemper, France: Thompkins & Cariou, 2007).

[4] Evola, *Imperialismo Pagano* (2004), pp. 183-293.

[5] English edition: *Revolt Against the Modern World* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1995).

[6] Julius Evola, *The Path of Cinnabar* (London: Arktos, 2010), pp. 152-154.

[7] H. T. Hansen, 'Julius Evola's Political Endeavors,' in Julius Evola, *Men Among the Ruins* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2002), pp. 62-63.

[8] Armin Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1933* (Stuttgart: F. Vorwerk, 1950); cited from 4. Auflage (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994).

[9] Ernst Jünger, quoted by Mohler, *Konservative Revolution*, p. 33.

[10] Ernst Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz* (Berlin: Frundsberg, 1929), p. 155. Translated as *The Adventurous Heart: Figures and Capriccios* (New York: Telos Press, 2012).

[11] Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950).

[12] 'I am not a human being, I am dynamite.' Friedrich Nietzsche, *Der Fall Wagner; Götzen-Dämmerung; Der Antichrist; Ecce Homo; Dionysos-Dithyramben; Nietzsche contra Wagner* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), p. 363. English version: *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the idols, and Other Writings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 143-144.

[13] Quoted by Mohler, *Konservative Revolution*, p. 90.

[14] Stefan Breuer, 'Italia docet,' *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993), pp. 124-135.

[15] Moeller van den Bruck, *Das Dritte Reich* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1931), p. 187. Translated as Germany's Third Empire (London: Arktos, 2012).

[16] Mohler, *Konservative Revolution*, p.116.

[17] Mohler, *Konservative Revolution*, p. 107.

[18] Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964).

[19] Evola, *The Path of Cinnabar*, pp. 154-155.

[20] See Stefan Breuer (1993), note 14 above.

[21] Julius Evola, *L' 'operaio' nel pensiero di Ernst Jünger* (Rome: G Volpe, 1974).

[22] Marilynne Robinson, *The Death of Adam*: *Essays on Modern Thought* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), p. 157.

[23] Julius Evola, *Fascism Viewed from the Right* (London: Arktos, 2013).

[24] The Weimar Republic was the liberal democratic state which existed in Germany from shortly after Germany's defeat in the First World War until the passage of the Enabling Act in 1933, after Hitler's assumption of the Chancellorship. The Enabling Act suspended the Weimar Constitution, and effectively transferred all power to Hitler, ending the Weimar Republic.

[25] Georges Sorel (1847-1922) was a French philosopher who began as a Marxist and later developed Revolutionary Syndicalism. He advocated the use of myth and organised violence in revolutionary movements. He was influential upon both the Communist and Fascist movements. His primary works are *Reflections on Violence* and *The Illusions of Progress*.

[26] A series of revolutions based on liberal and socialist principles broke out in various European countries in 1848. In Germany (then the German Confederation), the social unrest led the various German states to convene an assembly to draft a new constitution, in which the delegates from each state were elected (the type of elections varied from state to state, using both direct and indirect means). This was the first elected parliament in German history. Frederick William IV of Prussia was elected to the position of Emperor of the new state. When he refused it, the Parliament soon collapsed, having lasted only one year.

[27] Frederick William IV (1795-1861) was the King of Prussia from 1840 until his death. He was strongly conservative.

[28] Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) was the Prussian leader who unified the German states into one nation during the 1860s, leading to his becoming the first Chancellor of the German Empire in 1871.

[29] The Second Reich, or the German Empire as it was known in its time, was established in 1871 with the unification of all the German states under the rule of Kaiser William I. It dissolved as a result of its defeat in the First World War in 1918.

[30] The *Kreuzzeitung*, or 'Cross Newspaper' (so called because its symbol was the Iron Cross) began publishing during the 1848 Revolution, and acted as a mouthpiece for Prussian conservatives.

[31] The German word *Volkstum* refers in a broad sense to the culture, character and traditions of a people.

[32] Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) was the foremost philosopher of German Idealism after Kant, and before Hegel. He was one of the intellectual founders of modern German nationalism during the Napoleonic Wars,

[33] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[34] Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860) was a German poet and author who was one of the founders of German nationalist ideology during the Napoleonic Wars.

[35] Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1862) was a German educator who founded the gymnastics movement in 1811, which was initially intended to physically prepare the German people to fight for their independence from Napoleon. Jahn served as both a soldier and an officer in the Prussian Army, and won the Iron Cross. In 1848, he was elected to the Frankfurt Parliament.

[36] Friedrich Lange (1852-1817) was a German journalist who was the founder of the Deutschbund.

[37] The Deutschbund was a nationalist group in Germany dedicated to *völkisch* ideology, and promoted aggressive German expansionism. It refrained from direct political action, however. Highly elitist, its membership was by invitation only. It was one of the few groups not affiliated with the National Socialist Party that was allowed to exist in Germany during the Third Reich, and survived until it was banned by the Allies in 1945.

[38] The *Völkische Bewegung*, or *völkisch* movement, was not an organisation in the usual sense, but rather a subculture in the Germany of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that took inspiration from the ideals of German Romanticism, had a strong belief in nature-worship and German traditions, and was both anti-urban and anti-modern.

[39] The *Risorgimento* ('resurgence') is the name for the liberation from Austro-Hungarian rule, conquest and unification of the various states on the Italian peninsula by the House of Savoy, the rulers of Piedmont in northern Italy. It included Garibaldi's overthrow of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1864) and culminated in Savoy's unprovoked invasion of the Papal States in 1870. This led to the creation of the modern Italian state.

[40] Following the collapse of the German Empire at the end of the First World War, all of Germany erupted into anarchy, with Communists, socialists and nationalists vying for power through street fighting. The revolution technically ended with the establishment of the Weimar Republic in 1919, but political violence and unrest continued for many years.

[41] The Central Powers in the First World War consisted of the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Ottoman Empire (and, later, Bulgaria).

[42] The Conservative Revolution is a term first coined by Hugo von Hoffmansthal, which has come to designate a loose confederation of anti-liberal German thinkers who wrote during the Weimar Republic. There was a great diversity of views within the ranks of the Conservative Revolutionaries, but in general they opposed both democratic capitalism and Communism in favor of a synthesis of the German (and especially Prussian) aristocratic traditions with socialism. The Conservative Revolutionaries opposed liberalism in all its forms, rejected a return to the Kaiser's Reich, and saw Germany as being culturally tilted more towards Russia than towards France or Britain.

[43] Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876-1925) was one of the principal authors of the German Conservative Revolution. He is best known for his 1923 book, *Das Dritte Reich,* translated as *Germany's Third Empire* (London: Arktos, 2012). A follower of Nietzsche, he advocated the idea of a third German empire to replace the Weimar Republic which would embody a synthesis between socialism and nationalism and provide for the needs of all citizens, but within a hierarchical framework based on traditional values. Despite Hitler's appropriation of his book's title, he rejected National Socialism for its anti-intellectual nature in a note he left just prior to his suicide.

[44] Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Das Ewige Reich* (Breslau: W. G. Korn, 1933-35), 3 vols.

[45] The Holy Roman Empire consisted of various Central European territories throughout its existence, lasting from 962 to 1806.

[46] Wilhelm II (1859-1941) was the Kaiser of the German Empire from 1888 until he abdicated the throne following the collapse of Germany in November 1918.

[47] Erich Maria Remarque (1898-1970) was a German writer who served in the First World War. His most well-known work is his 1927 novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which depicted the war as a horrific and futile struggle.

[48] Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1929).

[49] Thomas Mann, who was something of a conservative, summarised his thoughts on the post-war situation in *Reflections of a Non-Political Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1983).

[50] Franz Schauwecker (1890-1964) was a war veteran who wrote several famous books about his war experiences, becoming a nationalist writer in the Weimar era.

[51] Ernst Hugo Fischer (1897-1975) was a German philosopher and sociologist who was part of the nationalist movement in the Weimar era.

[52] Ernst Jünger (1895-1998) was one of the most prominent of the German Conservative Revolutionaries, but that was only one phase in a long and varied career. He volunteered for and fought in the German Army throughout the First World War, and was awarded the highest decoration, the Pour le Mérite, for his service. After the war, he wrote many books and novels, was active in German politics, experimented with psychedelic drugs, and travelled the world. During the Weimar period, he wrote a number of highly influential books based on his war experiences, works of philosophy, and essays supporting the revolutionary nationalist position. He remained ambivalent about National Socialism at first, but never joined the Party, and he had turned against the Nazis by the late 1930s. He rejoined the Wehrmacht at the outbreak of the

Second World War, however, and remained in Paris as a Captain, where he spent more time with Picasso and Cocteau than enforcing the occupation. His objections to the Nazis were influential upon the members of the Stauffenberg plot to assassinate Hitler in July 1944, which led to his dismissal from the Wehrmacht. After the war, Jünger's political views gradually moved toward a sort of aristocratic anarchism.

[53] *Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt* (Hamburg: Henseat. Verl.-Anst.,1932). Many view this work as the most important one to emerge from the Conservative Revolution. It has not been translated into English. However, many of the ideas it contains are summarised in Jünger's own essay, 'Total Mobilization,' which is available in Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

[54] Hermann Ehrhardt (1881-1971) was a Captain of the German Imperial Navy who fought in the First World War. Holding pro-monarchist views, he rejected the Versailles Treaty and the Weimar government and formed the paramilitary Second Marine Brigade in the immediate aftermath of the war. This Freikorps unit went on to combat Communists within Germany, as well as Polish separatists in Upper Silesia, which had been part of Prussia since Frederick the Great's time. The issue of Germany's borders continued to be debated for several years after the end of the war, and ultimately, the League of Nations transferred Upper Silesia to Poland. Ehrhardt refused to support Hitler, even when many Freikorps soldiers began to join the Nazis.

[55] The Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten (Steel Helmet, League of Frontline Soldiers) was a Freikorps organisation established in December 1918, and was financed by the Herrenklub, which Evola was associated with. The Stahlhelm also received an endorsement from Mussolini. By the late 1920s, they were the largest Freikorps group in Germany. In later years, they acted as the security force of the DNVP. Being pro-monarchy, the DNVP remained distinct from the National Socialists until after 1933, when extreme pressure by the Nazis resulted in the absorption of the Stahlhelm into the SA.

[56] Franz Seldte (1882-1947) was one of the founders of the Stahlhelm. He lost his left arm while fighting in the First World War. When Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, Seldte took the post of Minister of Labour in his cabinet, a post he was to hold until the end of the Third Reich, and he supervised the absorption of the Stahlhelm into the SA. He died in an American military hospital.

[57] Theodor Düsterberg (1875-1950) was an ex-army officer who joined the Stahlhelm in 1923, becoming one of its leaders by the following year. In the 1932 election he ran for president, but the Nazis sabotaged his chances by revealing that he had Jewish ancestry. He was offered a position in Hitler's cabinet in 1933, but refused it, objecting to the Nazis' excessive anti-Semitism and socialist tendencies. He likewise resigned from the Stahlhelm after it was absorbed by the Nazis. After being briefly imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp, he stayed out of politics for the remainder of his life.

[58] The Deutschnationale Volkspartei, or German National People's Party, was established in 1918 as an anti-socialist and pro-monarchist party, and was initially the largest Right-wing party in Weimar Germany until the late 1920s, when they were displaced by the National Socialists. In January 1933, it joined the coalition that brought Hitler to power, but dissolved itself by June as the Nazis became the only party.

[59] Alfred Hugenberg (1865-1951) was a German nationalist and businessman who joined the DNVP in 1919 and was elected to the Reichstag, also becoming a newspaper magnate. Following the DNVP's decline, Hugenberg began to support the Nazis as well, and forged an alliance between them and the DNVP, hoping to use the more popular Nazis as a means for securing his own goals. Upon Hitler's assumption of power, Hugenberg was briefly appointed Minister of

Economy and Minister of Agriculture, but by June, with the ousting of the DNVP from politics, he was forced to resign. He remained a 'guest' member of the Reichstag until 1945.

[60] The Reichswehr (Reich Defence) was the army established from the remnants of the army of the German Empire in 1919, its size being strictly limited by the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Its officers detested the Weimar Republic, however, and operated mostly independently of the civilian government. In 1935, the Reichswehr was renamed and reorganised as the Wehrmacht (Defence Force), following Hitler's abandonment of the terms of the Versailles Treaty.

[61] Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934) was a Prussian Field Marshal who became a German national hero following his defeat of the Russians at the Battle of Tannenberg in August 1914, in one of the first battles of the First World War, and he was appointed Chief of the General Staff in 1916. During the war, his popularity eclipsed that of the Kaiser himself. In 1919, Hindenburg was called before the Reichstag to answer questions regarding his role in Germany's defeat. Refusing to answer questions, Hindenburg instead read a statement stating that the army had been preparing a victory offensive in the summer of 1918 that was only halted by a 'stab in the back' from politicians at home, which became a rallying cry for the Right during the Weimar years. Although he had no political ambitions of his own, he reluctantly agreed to run for President as an independent in the 1925 elections at the urging of the conservatives, and won. He won re-election in 1932, but refused Hitler's demand that he be appointed Chancellor, disliking both Hitler and the Nazis. Under intense pressure from his colleagues, however, he did appoint Hitler as Chancellor on 30 January 1933, and supported the Nazis in their efforts to become the only legal party in Germany. Suffering from cancer, Hindenburg did little to oppose the Nazis thereafter, although privately he objected to many of their activities. After his death in 1934, Hitler assumed the offices of both President and Chancellor.

[62] The Herrenklub (Gentlemen's Club) was a powerful organisation of pro-monarchy German aristocrats with which Evola himself was affiliated, initially founded by Moeller van den Bruck. After 1933, its members had hoped to influence National Socialist policy, but they were ignored by the Party.

[63] Junker, or 'young gentleman' was a term coined in the nineteenth century to refer to the Prussian nobility. They ceased to exist following the absorption of Prussia into Poland after the Second World War under Soviet auspices.

[64] The Reichstag was the name of the German parliament from 1860 until 1945. Since 1949, it has been termed the Bundestag.

[65] The March on Rome refers to the uprising of the Fascists throughout Italy in October 1922, which led to Mussolini's appointment as Prime Minister.

[66] The Centre Party was a Catholic political party.

[67] Franz von Papen (1879-1969) had served as an officer in the war, then joined the Centre Party. He was also a member of the Herrenklub. In 1932, he was appointed by Hindenburg to be Chancellor of Germany, although he was forced to resign after only a few months. In January 1933 he urged Hindenburg to appoint Hitler, believing that he could be controlled and the Nazis used as a tool by the conservatives.

[68] Konstantin von Neurath (1873-1956) served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1932 until 1938. During the war he served as the *Reichsprotektor* of Bohemia and Moravia.

[69] Johann Ludwig Graf Schwerin von Krosigk (1887-1977) was Minister of Finance from 1932 until 1935.

[70] On 27 February 1933, the Reichstag building was destroyed in an arson attack. The Communists and the Nazis traded accusations over responsibility, although to this day it remains unclear who

did it. The Communist Marinus van der Lubbe was tried and executed for the crime.

[71] Also known as the Reichstag Fire Decree, it suspended civil liberties in Germany and transferred political power from the states to the central government.

[72] The SA (Sturmabteilung, or 'Stormtroopers'), otherwise known as the Brownshirts, were the paramilitary wing of the Nazi Party.

[73] The West German government banned the Communist Party of Germany in 1956, although it was reconstituted in 1968 under a different name.

[74] Known in English as the Enabling Act, this allowed the Chancellor to enact laws without having to consult the Reichstag, and became the cornerstone of Hitler's power.

[75] In Italy, the Chamber of Fasces and Corporations was set up in January 1939 to replace the Chamber of Deputies. Unlike in the Chamber of Deputies, where representatives were chosen by popular vote, representatives in the new Chamber were nominated by the Fascist Grand Council, the National Council of Corporations, and the National Council of the Fascist Party.

[76] Robert Ley (1890-1945) was the Head of the German Labour Front from 1933 until 1945.

[77] The idea of the 'rule of law' which in its modern form derives mainly from the English political tradition, holds that no one is above the law, including the political leadership, in contrast to traditional monarchy, in which the monarch rules by divine right.

[78] The *Länder* are the various states that comprise Germany. Prior to 1933, and today, they enjoy a degree of autonomy from the central government.

[79] *Gaue* was the term used for the regions of the German-speaking areas of the Carolingian Empire during Medieval times. Under the Nazis, the *Länder* were reorganised into *Gaue*. While the *Gauleiters* who ruled each *Gau* had considerable autonomy, through them they were all ultimately subject to the authority of the NSDAP.

[80] The Night of the Long Knives refers to the period between 30 June and 2 July 1934, when the Nazis arrested and executed many of their political opponents, allegedly to prevent a coup by the SA. The victims were not all part of the SA, however, and the Nazis used the opportunity to eliminate many of their rivals in the conservative establishment as well.

[81] Kurt von Schleicher (1882-1934) was a Reichswehr general who sought to make the military the most powerful player in German politics again, and heavily involved in the machinations that eventually brought Hitler to power, believing that Hitler could be used as a pawn by the more mainstream conservatives. He served as Minister of Defence in von Papen's government. When von Papen resigned as Chancellor in December 1932, von Schleicher succeeded him, but his brief administration was beset by too many problems and he was dismissed after less than two months, bringing Hitler to power. He was killed during the Night of the Long Knives.

[82] Herbert von Bose (1893-1934) was the Chief of the Press Division in von Papen's office, while he was serving as Vice Chancellor to Hitler. He was in charge of a bulwark of conservatives who sought to control and then overthrow Hitler. He was killed during the Night of the Long Knives.

[83] George von der Decken (1898-1945) was a Reichswehr officer who was appointed to the Ministry of Defence in the Hitler-von Papen cabinet.

[84] Werner von Alvensleben (1875-1947) was a German politican and businessman who was close with von Schleicher. Disliking Hitler and the Nazis, he was part of the conservative opposition to them. He was arrested and imprisoned for several months on the Night of the Long Knives, and Hitler accused him in a speech of being the go-between for Roehm and von Schleicher during their coup preparations.

[85] Edgar Julius Jung (1894-1934) was a lawyer who was also one of the principal writers of the Conservative Revolutionary movement, authoring one of its most important works, *The Rule of*

the Inferiour (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), two vols. He became von Papen's speechwriter in the Hitler-von Papen government, and was killed during the Night of the Long Knives.

[86] Ernst Roehm (1887-1934) had joined the German Workers' Party, the predecessor to the NSDAP, even before Hitler did, and was co-founder of the SA and later its leader, and was one of Hitler's closest advisors and confidants.

[87] 'National army.' Following the Nazis' rise to power, Roehm and his SA pressed for the creation of a new army that would combine the Reichswehr with the SA. This alarmed the Reichswehr, who feared the socialist ideals of the SA and the fact that it consisted of more than three million men, while the Reichswehr itself had been limited to 100,000 soldiers by the Versailles Treaty.

[88] In 1966, when Mao Tse Tung proclaimed the Cultural Revolution, groups of students, who went by the name of the 'Red Guards,' and who were fanatically loyal to the ideals of the Revolution, were used to attack anyone who was perceived as being an enemy of the revolution, and very quickly subjected the country to a reign of terror, seizing control of cities and fighting with rival factions. At first they were encouraged by Mao, but the chaos grew so severe that by September 1967, he was forced to call in the army to restore order and eliminate the Red Guards.

[89] Gregor Strasser (1892-1934) was a war veteran who established his own Freikorps unit in 1919, with Heinrich Himmler as his adjutant. In 1921, he began supporting the fledgling Nazi Party, and was appointed the commander of the SA of the Lower Bavaria, later becoming the Party *Gauleiter* for the region, national chief of the Party's propaganda efforts (Goebbels was his subordinate), and finally, national leader of the NSDAP. Beginning in the mid-1920s, he worked to establish the Party in Berlin and northern Germany, resulting in higher membership numbers than in the south. Unlike Hitler's organisation in Bavaria, Strasser's wing of the Party was strongly socialist and anti-capitalist in ideology, leading to conflicts between Strasser and Hitler. By January 1933, Hitler had broken with Strasser, and moved to strip him and his followers of prominent NSDAP positions. Strasser was killed during the Night of the Long Knives.

[90] In 1920, the League of Nations, under the auspices of the Versailles Treaty, ordered the Saar region, which was the heart of German industry, to be occupied by French and British forces until 1935. Likewise, the Memel Territory and Danzig, whose sovereignty was contested between Lithuania and Poland, respectively, and Germany, were placed under the League's authority.

[91] A type of anointing oil used in many branches of Christianity. By 'lacking any superior chrism,' Evola means that Hitler did not claim to rule by divine right.

[92] The *Führerprinzip*, or 'leadership principle,' was initially developed by the philosopher Count Hermann Graf von Keyserling, who was unaffiliated with the Nazis (and actually opposed to them). It is the idea that certain individuals are destined to become leaders in accordance with Social Darwinism, and that this quality puts them above the laws that govern the rest of society. The Nazis applied this principle to Hitler himself, whose will, being viewed as the manifestation of the will of the German people, was unrestricted by law or by any checks on his power. The Nazis also applied this to the various branches of the government and the Party, in which each leader exercised absolute power over his administrative area, being answerable only to Hitler.

[93] Germani was the Latin term for the tribes in Gaul, first coined by Julius Caesar in his war chronicles.

[94] Latin: 'duke.'

[95] Latin: 'king.'

[96] Hitler was highly critical of the Habsburgs in *Mein Kampf*, going so far as to say that he had developed a hatred of them during his youth in Austria for having allowed the nation to become a

multiethnic, rather than a German state.

[97] Hermann Rauschning (1887-1982) was a war veteran who was a landowner in Danzig. In 1932, he joined the NSDAP, believing that it was the best hope for the reunification of Danzig with Germany, and was elected President of the Senate of Danzig in June 1933. Unlike the Nazis, however, he was a traditional conservative, and disliked their extreme anti-Semitism. In 1934, he resigned from the Party, and in 1935, he began to support an alliance of Danzig with Poland rather than Germany, as well as non-Nazi candidates in the government. Realising that his life was in danger, he fled Danzig in 1936, ending up in the United States, where he became a citizen. He wrote several works that were critical of Hitler's regime and which were taken up by Allied propaganda efforts during the war, based in part on conversations Rauschning claimed to have had with Hitler, in which Hitler revealed his true, anti-Christian and megalomaniacal ambitions, and supposed mental illness. Since Rauschning's death, the consensus among historians has been that these alleged conversations were fabrications.

[98] *The Revolution of Nihilism: Warning to the West* (New York: Alliance Book Corporation, 1942). The subtitle is different in the text because Evola is referring to the Italian edition, which had a different subtitle.

[99] Ernst von Salomon (1902-1972) was a German military cadet who joined the Freikorps in 1919 in order to counter the liberal aims of the Weimar Republic. He wrote books about his experiences which show a strong Conservative Revolutionary orientation. He assisted the assassins of Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau, who was a Jew, in 1922, an event which was hailed by the Nazis. After serving a prison sentence, however, von Salomon rejected National Socialism, and he became a screenwriter in Germany. He married a Jewish woman and protected her throughout the Third Reich, and reportedly he rescued other Jews as well; nevertheless, he was imprisoned by the Allies after the war under accusation of having been a Nazi supporter.

[100] The Jacobin Club, a political group in eighteenth-century France, was one of the driving forces of the French Revolution. Since then, 'Jacobin' has often been used as a generic term for Left-wing radicals.

[101] The term Prussian socialism was first coined by Oswald Spengler in a book of the same name. He held that the Prussian monarchy had always governed according to socialist principles.

[102] The House of Hohenzollern is a noble family which contributed many monarchs to Germany, Prussia and Rumania over the course of nearly a thousand years. In this case, Evola is referring to the Hohenzollerns who ruled the German Empire. In 1891, with Kaiser Wilhelm's support (and in opposition to the wishes of Bismarck, who was dismissed over the row), the Reichstag passed the Workers Protection Acts, which improved working conditions for Germany's workers and formalised labour relations.

[103] Greek: 'nation,' in the sense of a people with a shared culture and language.

[104] The Habsburg Empire, or the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was a loose confederation of Central European states that existed between 1867 and 1918, and which supplanted the earlier Austrian Empire, which was also ruled by the Habsburg monarchy.

[105] The Nazis held that the German people needed more territory in order to continue to grow and develop. The doctrine of *lebensraum* pre-dates the Nazis, but Hitler occasionally invoked it as a justification for German expansion into Eastern Europe, although some historians have disputed whether this was an actual Nazi doctrine.

[106] Walther Rathenau (1867-1922) , a German Jew and industrialist, served in the War Ministry during the First World War and then as part of the reconstruction efforts in post-war Germany. Although opposed to liberalism and socialism, the Right in Germany saw him as an enemy, and

he was assassinated by Freikorps soldiers on 24 June 1922, in the hopes that his death would hasten the collapse of the government.

[107] From Ernst von Salomon, *Der Fragebogen* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1951). English edition: *The Answers of Ernst von Salomon to the 131 Questions in the Allied Military Government* Fragebogen (London: Putnam, 1954).

[108] Armin Mohler (1920-2003) was a Swiss political writer whose work did much to preserve the legacy of Germany's Conservative Revolution. He was also a supporter of the European New Right.

[109] Werner von Blomberg (1878-1946) was appointed to be Minister of Defence in 1933, in Hitler's new government. In 1934, he had the Reichswehr pledge their loyalty to Hitler personally and in 1935 he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. In 1937, however, when Hitler expressed his desire for Germany to begin expanding into Central Europe, von Blomberg voiced his objections, fearing that such moves would provoke France and Britain into declaring war on Germany.

[110] Werner von Fritsch (1880-1939) was a Nazi supporter who was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht in 1935. He soon came to dislike Nazi policies and the SS in particular, which he saw as a rival to the Wehrmacht.

[111] In 1938, dissatisfied with the lack of support from von Blomberg and von Fritsch for Hitler's intended objectives, the leadership began looking for reasons to oust them. Von Blomberg was married in January 1938, and shortly thereafter it was revealed that his wife had an earlier criminal record of prostitution in Berlin. Marrying a spouse with a criminal record was a violation of the officers' code of conduct. Hitler ordered von Blomberg to annul the marriage, but he refused. When Hermann Göring threatened to make the information public, von Blomberg resigned. Pleased with the outcome, Göring and Himmler then produced evidence showing that von Fritsch was a homosexual. It soon turned out that the evidence had actually been gathered on another officer, but von Fritsch's resignation was secured when witnesses were found to press the case against him. Von Fritsch was soon exonerated, but Hitler refused to reinstate him, and he was reduced to being the Colonel of an artillery unit. He was killed during the invasion of Poland in 1939; many believed that he deliberately sought death in combat.

[112] The 1936 Summer Olympics were held in Berlin, which allowed the Nazis to showcase the achievements of their regime.

[113] Evola is mistaken about this story. There was a battle in the Teutoburg Forest on 2-3 April 1945, although the defenders were not from the Hitler Youth, but were rather military cadets from the Hanover Officers' School, and the attackers were British infantry, not American tanks. It is correct that the cadets were successful in routing the British, inflicting heavy casualties on them, and in fact nearly overran their headquarters, although they were forced to surrender the following day when large British reinforcements arrived. Evola may have mistaken this battle for an earlier one, when the 12th SS Panzer Divison Hitlerjugend, which was comprised largely of recruits from the Hitler Youth, succeeded in forcing the retreat of a Canadian tank column at Normandy on 7 June 1944, the second day of the D-Day invasion.

[114] The Kraft durch Freude, or Strength through Joy organisation, was a Nazi initiative that sought to engage the German working class in leisure activities normally reserved for the upper classes, such as concerts and vacation trips.

[115] The National Agency for Workers' Assistance was the successor organisation to the National Recreation Club, which sought to provide leisure for the Italian workers by engaging them in sports and similar activities, although it never reached the scale of Strength through Joy.

[116] Believing that the use of *voi* would instil a greater sense of camaraderie amongst the various classes of the Italian people, the Fascists launched an aggressive campaign in the newspapers to promote its use.

[117] Italian: 'of race.' Evola, like Spengler and other authors of the Conservative Revolution, holds that one who is 'of race' represents the highest qualities of a particular people. This elite, therefore, are the only genuine representatives of a people.

[118] The German Student Corps are student organisations in German schools which have their origins in the fifteenth century, similar to fraternities.

[119] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book I, Chapter 4, 'Munich.'

[120] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book II, Chapter 12, 'The Trade Union Question.'

[121] This occurred on 2 May 1933. The trade unions were replaced by the German Labour Front.

[122] In the Third Reich, Social Honour Courts were established to mediate between the workers and the business owners in factories. Although modified by them, this was actually not an innovation of the National Socialists, as similar courts had existed in Germany prior to the Third Reich.

[123] This was the Labour Organisation Law, which formalised labour relations, formerly negotiated by the trade unions until their banning, under the auspices of the German Labour Front.

[124] After 1933, the Nazis' German Labour Front was the only trade union organisation. Workers were not required to join it, although finding employment without being a member was very difficult.

[125] On 24 February 1920, Hitler read out a 25-point programme at a meeting of the nascent NSDAP which had been developed jointly by the Party's leadership. The opposition to 'interest slavery' was Point 11, along with the demand for the abolition of incomes not earned by work. It was introduced by Gottfried Feder, an economist affiliated with the early NSDAP (and one of its original founders), who was strongly anti-capitalist. Although the programme always remained the Party's official doctrine, it was largely ignored in later years, as was Feder himself. A translation of the programme was made in Germany and has been reprinted many times; Gottfried Feder, *The Programme of the N.S.D.A.P.: and its General Conceptions* (Munich: Franz Eher Verlag, 1932).

[126] Point 13 called for the state to assume control of all large businesses. Point 14 called for profit-sharing in large businesses.

[127] Hjalmar Schacht (1877-1970) was a German economist and politician who was President of the Reichsbank from 1923 until 1930, and again from 1933 until 1939.

[128] Richard Walther Darré (1895-1953) was also a pioneer in the ecological field.

[129] Blood and soil, which was a cornerstone of Nazi ideology, held that the national community should be based on people of common blood who have an intimate relationship with their native land.

[130] Richard Walther Darré, *Das Bauerntum als Lebensquell der Nordischen Rasse* (The Peasantry as the Source of Life of the Nordic Race, Munich: Lehmann, 1929).

[131] Richard Walther Darré, *Neuadel aus blut und boden* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1930).

[132] Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl (1823-1897) was a German writer who was instrumental in developing the *Völkisch* ideology.

[133] Wilhelm von Polenz (1861-1903) was a German novelist of the naturalist school.

[134] Wilhelm von Polenz, *Der Büttnerbauer* (Berlin: F. Fontane & Co., 1913).

[135] Frederick II (1712-1786) was the King of Prussia from 1740, known as 'the Great,' who was credited with modernising the Prussian army and was known as a brilliant strategist. He also

introduced modern economic reforms into the Prussian state.

[136] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book II, Chapter 3, 'Subjects and Citizens of the State.'

[137] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book II, Chapter 3, 'Subjects and Citizens of the State.'

[138] The German Faith Movement was the outcome of this goal. It was based in part on the Nazis' notion of a 'Positive Christianity,' which meant a form of Christianity purged of Jewish influence and transcending the Catholic/Protestant split, as well as including elements derived from Hinduism, Germanic paganism and other sources, particularly Nazi ideology. Although tolerated, the Movement never had more than 200,000 members, and never received official blessings from the Nazi leadership, who feared angering the traditional churches. C. G. Jung praised the Movement in his essay, 'Wotan.'

[139] Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1881-1962) had served as a missionary in India for several years, which caused him to lose faith in Christianity. He attended the University of Oxford and attained a doctorate in Sanskrit, and then taught as an Indologist in Germany. He founded the German Faith Movement in 1934, but left it in 1936, remaining close to the Nazi leadership. After the war he continued in efforts to create his own religious institution.

[140] Ernst Bergmann (1881-1945) was a German philosopher and a member of the NSDAP who held that Jesus was not a Jew, but rather an Aryan, and that Hitler was the new messiah. He wrote books advocating for a new German religion which earned him a place on the Vatican's list of banned authors. He committed suicide at the end of the war.

[141] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book II, Chapter 2, 'The State.'

[142] This law was enacted on 15 September 1935, forbidding marriages and extramarital relations between Jews and Germans.

[143] Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927) was an English philosopher whose ideas about the supremacy of the Germanic peoples, as outlined in his most fundamental book, *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, became highly influential upon the German racialist movement.

[144] Baldur von Schirach (1907-1974) was the leader of the Hitler Youth from 1933 until 1940, and then became *Gauleiter* of Vienna.

[145] A designation for a subset of the Germanic peoples.

[146] The term German Movement 'was used to describe the German portion of the Conservative Revolution,' according to Armin Mohler in *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1981-1933*, pp. 12-18 (Der Begriff 'Deutsche Bewegung').

[147] In May 1939, a German ocean liner, the MS *St. Louis*, set sail for Cuba with 937 passengers aboard, mostly German Jews who were hoping to find refuge there. Upon arrival, however, the Cuban government only allowed 22 of the non-Jewish passengers to debark, refusing entry to the remaining 915. The ship then set sail for Florida, but the passengers were refused entry there as well. Canada, likewise, did not accept them. The *St. Louis* then returned to Europe, and various European countries accepted the passengers as refugees. (The ship was not sunk by its passengers, contrary to Evola's belief.)

[148] This refers to Joel Brand (1906-1964), a Hungarian Jew and a Zionist who was active in attempts to evacuate the Hungarian Jews following Hungary's occupation by the Nazis on 19 March 1944. Brand met with Adolf Eichmann to discuss these plans, and Eichmann offered to exchange the evacuation of one million Jews to Turkey (not Egypt) in exchange for trucks and other supplies that he expected Brand to negotiate from the Allies. Brand was sent to Turkey and made contact with the British (who arrested him as an enemy agent). The British rejected the proposal, believing it to be an SS trick.

[149] The idea of resettling European Jews in Madagascar dates back to the nineteenth century in anti-Semitic circles. The Nazi leadership took up the idea in 1940, shortly after the conquest of France, since Madagascar was a French colony. This was seen as preferable to deporting the Jews *en masse* to Poland. The Madagascar Plan called for the use of the Royal Navy to transport the Jews there, since at the time it was expected that Britain would soon surrender to Germany. This never happened, however, and in 1942, the British captured the island.

[150] Ernst vom Rath (1909-1938) was shot in the German embassy in Paris on 7 November 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan, a German-Jewish refugee. While it was assumed that Grynszpan had done this in response to Germany's policies regarding the Jews, it was also rumoured that the two had been in a homosexual relationship, although this has never been proven. When vom Rath died of his wounds on 9 November, riots broke out in parts of Germany, leading to the destruction of many synagogues and Jewish-owned shops. Some Jews were killed or arrested. This came to be known as the *Kristallnacht*, or the Night of Broken Glass.

[151] In July 1938, under pressure from Germany, the Italian Fascists issued their 'Manifesto of Race,' which made anti-Semitism an official part of Fascist doctrine for the first time. The new laws were not well-received in Italy, however, even among some of the Fascist leadership.

[152] Today's historians generally provide higher estimates, often ranging between 160,000 and 245,000 Jews remaining in Germany at the outbreak of the Second World War.

[153] Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) was the Prime Minister of England in 1868 and again from 1874-1880, and expanded the British Empire.

[154] Prince Klemens Wenzel von Metternich (1773-1859) was an Austrian statesman who was one of the most important European diplomats of the nineteenth century. He was involved in the negotiation of the Treaty of Paris in 1814, which marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, he was instrumental in establishing the new map of Europe, and the balance of power between the Great Powers which was to last, more or less intact, until the First World War.

[155] Latin: 'closed number,' meaning to limit the number of something.

[156] Otto Weininger (1880-1903) was an Austrian Jewish philosopher who became a Christian, despised Judaism, and, because of his belief that he had failed to overcome the latter within himself, committed suicide. His primary work, *Sex and Character*, offers a theory of gender based on the idea that all individuals are composed of both male and female elements, with masculinity described as the genius' striving for absolute understanding, and femininity as obsession with sexuality and motherhood. References to Weininger abound in Evola's own work.

[157] *Il Mito del Sangue* (Milan, 1942), second edition, Chapter IX.

[158] Adolf Stoecker (1835-1909) was a Lutheran theologian who was the court chaplain of Kaiser Wilhelm II. In 1878 he established the Christian Social Party, and used it as a vehicle to combat what he saw as the growing power of socialists, Communists and Jews in Germany, calling for restrictions on the civil rights of Jews, as well as quotas on them, to be introduced.

[159] Paul de Lagarde (1827-1891) was a biblical scholar and orientalist at the University of Göttingen. He called for the removal of Jews from German society, as well as a new form of Christianity purged of Semitic influence.

[160] Werner Sombart (1863-1941) was a German economist and sociologist. Evola is referring to his work, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1913).

[161] From a speech given on 2 September 1938.

[162] Point 24 of the 25-point programme issued in 1920.

[163] Ernst Graf zu Reventlow (1869-1943) was a former German naval officer who was active in the more Left-leaning elements of the nationalist movement in Weimar Germany, such as Gregor Strasser's wing of the NSDAP. He served as deputy chairman of the German Faith Movement from 1934 until 1936.

[164] Erich Ludendorff (1865-1937) was a former general who was a hero of the First World War, and became very active in nationalist circles after the war. He detested Christianity and became a worshipper of the ancient Germanic god, Wotan. He and his wife attempted to revive the old religion in Germany, classifying Christians along with Jews and Freemasons as enemies of the true German faith.

[165] Latin: 'on an equal footing.'

[166] Hans Friedrich Karl Günther (1891-1968) was a German racial theorist, eugenicist and Nordicist who authored many books. His work was admired by some in the Nazi leadership and he received several honours. Günther discusses Buddhism in his book, *The Racial Elements of European History* (London: Methuen, 1927).

[167] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Book II, Chapter 7, 'The Struggle with the Red Front.'

[168] In reality, in the East the swastika has no set direction, and is used in both forms interchangeably. Indeed, the right-handed form that the Nazis adopted is the most common one.

[169] Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, *The Morning of the Magicians* (New York: Stein & Day, 1964). This is the book which first gave rise to many of the false myths which persist today about a supposed 'occult conspiracy' at the heart of National Socialism, and, although Evola himself is not mentioned, many of his other acquaintances are unjustly implicated in it. Even René Guénon is said to be consistent with Nazi ideology. Evola addressed the misinformation contained in this book in his essay, 'Hitler and the Secret Societies,' which is available at *The Julius Evola Network* (www.juliusevola.net/excerpts/Hitler_and_the_Secret_Societies.html).

[170] The Thule Society was a *Völkisch* occult order founded in Munich in 1917. It is notable in that the German Workers' Party, the predecessor to the NSDAP, was founded by members of the Thule Society. Hitler already severed the Party's links with the Society by 1920, however, and the Society itself dissolved during the 1920s.

[171] Guido von List (1848-1919) was a writer and the founder of a mystical Order, the Armanen, which was based on ideas of German paganism, Christianity and Theosophy.

[172] Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874-1954) was a former Austrian monk who established the mystical Ordo Novi Templi (Order of New Templars) in 1907, based on ideas derived from Guido von List and other sources, and infused with Aryan racial ideology and anti-Semitism. Although many have claimed, including Lanz von Liebenfels himself, that Hitler was influenced by his ideas, Hitler banned him from publishing following the *Anschluss* in 1938.

[173] *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (Torrance: Noontide Press, 1982).

[174] Herman Wirth (1885-1981) was a Dutch German who believed that there was an ancient, worldwide Nordic culture which has been forgotten apart from some traces which remain encoded in ancient myths and symbols. He was briefly involved with the SS Ahnenerbe in the 1930s. None of his works have been translated, although Joscelyn Godwin has published two excellent articles on Wirth, 'Out of Arctica? Herman Wirth's Theory of Human Origins,' in *Rûna* 5 (1999); and 'Herman Wirth on Folksong,' in *Tyr* 2 (2004).

[175] Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815-1887) was a Swiss anthropologist who asserted in his book, *Myth, Religion, and Mother Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), that lunar matriarchy was the primordial condition of human society, and that solar patriarchy emerged later in opposition to it. Evola hailed Bachofen as a traditionalist and discussed him frequently in his

own writings, particularly in 'Matriarchy in J. J. Bachofen's Work,' available at *Evola As He Is* (thompkins_cariou.tripod.com/id22.html).

[176] Evola is referring to the Illuminati of Bavaria, a secret society which sought to overcome the influence of the Catholic Church in all aspects of German society, among other goals.

[177] Christoph Steding, *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1938). This book was a bestseller in the Third Reich. Christoph Steding (1903-1938) was a German historian who was strongly influenced by Max Weber and Carl Schmitt.

[178] Stoicism was a school of philosophy which originated in Classical Athens, although as a term it continues to be applied today to philosophies which share its general characteristics. Basically, the Stoics believed that it is human emotions which lead individuals into error, and that the only way to lead a truly virtuous life is to transcend the emotions. They also emphasised the importance of logic and reason as the sole paths to genuine knowledge.

[179] The *Corpus Iuris Militaris* was a text first published by the jurist and historian Johann Christian Lünig (1662-1740) in Leipzig in 1723, being a collection of the regulations of the German armies that had been part of the Holy Roman Empire.

[180] Marcus Aurelius (121-180) was Emperor of the Roman Empire from 160. His book, *Meditations*, is a classic of Stoicism, dealing with issues of service and duty for a leader.

[181] Frederick William I (1688-1740) was King of Prussia from 1713 until his death.

[182] This is an oft-quoted sentence that is variously attributed to Göring, Goebbels and other Nazi leaders. In fact, the line comes from a play written by Hanns Johst, a playwright who was a member of the NSDAP, which was performed in 1933 to celebrate the Nazis' rise to power. The play, *Schlageter*, was based on the life of Albert Leo Schlageter, a Freikorps soldier who was executed by the French in 1923 for conducting sabotage against their occupation of the Ruhr. The line occurs in a scene which depicts Schlageter and a friend studying for a school exam, when they begin debating whether studies are of use in a time when their country is in danger. His friend, dismissing their studies, exclaims, 'Whenever I hear about culture, I release the safety on my Browning!'

[183] Prince Heinrich of Bavaria (1884-1916) was also Heinrich Himmler's godfather. He joined the Bavarian army and was killed in battle in 1916.

[184] St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) was a Spanish knight who became a monk after being wounded in battle. He was the founder of the Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits, who became known for being fanatically dedicated in their missions.

[185] This is an oft-repeated legend about the SS, although no evidence exists suggesting that it actually took place.

[186] Josias, Hereditary Prince of Waldeck and Pyrmont (1896-1967) was a veteran of the First World War. He joined the NSDAP in 1929 and the SS in 1930, eventually becoming a general in the Waffen-SS in 1944.

[187] Established in 1874, the Corporation was the largest organisation for noblemen in the German Empire. In the Third Reich, it adapted itself closely to Nazi ideology.

[188] Paul Hausser (1880-1972) who served in the German army during the First World War, and then the Reichswehr. Following his retirement in 1932, he became a member of the Stahlhelm. Following its absorption into the SA, he joined the SS, and become one of the most famous generals of the Waffen-SS.

[189] Race and Resettlement Main Office. Initially it only evaluated the racial backgrounds of volunteers for the SS, but during the war it also became involved in the resettlement of

populations in the occupied territories in areas that were to be colonised by Germans.

[190] In January 1937, Himmler gave a speech in which detailed his intentions for the SS, including a broader vision of the SD. The text of Himmler's speech is available at the *World Future Fund* (www.worldfuturefund.org/wffmaster/Reading/Germany/Himmler%20Jan%2037%20Speech.htm).

[191] Latin: 'by right of office.'

[192] Latin: 'to the honour.'

[193] Franz Altheim (1898-1976) was a German historian with a strong interest in Classical Rome. Although at first he resisted National Socialism, by 1936 he realized that he would have to embrace Nazi views if he were to continue his work. As a result, he began working for the SS Ahnenerbe in 1937 (although he never joined the SS or the Nazi Party), and, with financial support from Heinrich Himmler, he went on lengthy research trips in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. His stated purpose was to conduct research on the outskirts of the Roman Empire, but he also cultivated Nazi ties to the Rumanian Iron Guard, as well as to pro-German Arabs in Iraq and Syria, and wrote secret intelligence reports for Himmler. After the war, he resumed teaching in Berlin. He was the author of *A History of Roman Religion* (London: Methuen, 1938).

[194] Oswald Menghin (1888-1973) was an Austrian prehistorian who did research on the relationship between race and culture. A German nationalist, he worked with the Austrian branch of the NSDAP.

[195] *Der Aufgang der Menschheit: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Religion, Symbolik und Schrift der atlantisch-nordischen Rasse* (The Dawn of Humanity, Jena: Diederichs, 1934).

[196] Gottlob Berger (1896-1975) was the Chief of Staff for the Waffen-SS after 1940. He was convicted of complicity in the genocide of the European Jews in 1949 and sentenced to ten years in prison. After his release, he worked for *Nation Europa*, a German-based journal that called for a new brand of pan-European nationalism, which Evola himself wrote for, and which also has featured many prominent authors on the Right and the European New Right.

[197] Felix Steiner (1896-1966) was a veteran of both World Wars. After the First World War, he served in the Freikorps, and then returned to the Reichswehr, transferring to the Waffen-SS in 1935. He was regarded as one of the best officers of the Waffen-SS.

[198] Felix Steiner, *Die Armee der Geächteten* (Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1963).

[199] The United Nations Conference on International Organisation, which established the Charter for what would become the United Nations, took place in San Francisco in April 1945.

[200] Latin: 'at the point of death.'

[201] Folke Bernadotte (1895-1948), a Swedish Count, member of the royal family and diplomat who worked with the Red Cross during the war to bring home prisoners-of-war from Germany. Working with the United Nations after the war, he was sent to Jerusalem in 1948 to act as a mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict, where he was assassinated by the Zionist group Lehi (also known as the Stern Gang), organised in part by Yitzhak Shamir, the future Prime Minister of Israel.

[202] On 19 July 1940, Hitler gave a speech to the Reichstag to celebrate the recent German conquest of France. At the end of it, he appealed to the 'reason and common sense' of the English people, saying that he saw no reason for the war to continue.

[203] Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke the Elder (1800-1891) was chief of staff for the Prussian army, and is credited with modernising the force. He led the Prussian armies in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

[204] In 1938, Germany demanded that it be allowed to reincorporate Danzig into the Reich. Poland rejected the German demands. The disagreement over Danzig and certain other issues led to a German attack on Poland and to the outbreak of the Second World War on 1 September 1939.

[205] Usually translated as 'master race,' which was a term used by the Nazis for the Nordic race, which they held to be the purest branch of the Aryan race.

[206] Hugh Trevor-Roper (ed.), *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1953). Henry Picker was one of those who transcribed the conversations.

[207] Andrei Vlasov (1901-1946) was a Soviet Red Army general who was captured by the Germans in 1942. He told his captors that he had always been opposed to Stalin. Shortly thereafter, the Wehrmacht contacted Vlasov about helping in the German war effort against Stalin, and he suggested that be given command of an army comprising recruits from among the millions of Soviet prisoners the Germans had taken. The Germans were at first reluctant, but by September 1944 the strategic situation had grown so desperate that the Germans allowed the creation of the Russian Liberation Army. Vlasov won recruits by convincing the captured soldiers that they would be deported to Siberia as traitors if Stalin won the war. Vlasov also headed the political arm of the liberation effort, the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia. The efforts came about too late to affect the outcome of the war, however. Although they surrendered to the Western allies, Vlasov and many of his men were repatriated to the Soviet Union and executed after the war.

[208] On this date, a conspiracy of German military officers attempted to assassinate Hitler and overthrow the Nazi regime.

[209] The surrender terms granted wide powers to the occupying Allies.

[210] Hans-Joachim Schoeps (1909-1980) was a German-Jewish historian and philosopher of religion who was strongly attracted to the Conservative Revolution.

[211] The Kreisau Circle was a resistance movement against the Nazis, although it broke up in January 1944 following the arrest of its leader, Helmuth von Moltke, by the Gestapo.

[212] Helmuth von Moltke (1907-1945). He was executed in January 1945.

[213] Adolf Reichwein (1898-1944) was a First World War veteran and educator. He was to have become Minister of Culture, had the plot succeeded. He was executed in November 1944.

[214] Claus von Stauffenberg (1907-1944) was a Prussian aristocrat and Wehrmacht officer who led the assassination attempt against Hitler, placing the bomb personally. When it failed, he was immediately executed.

[215] German: 'dealing with the past.' The rebellious German youth of 1968 used this term to call for Germany to confront its Nazi past, including a review of Germany's history and its cultural traditions to account for those factors which allegedly led to the crimes of the Nazis.